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VICTIMS OF GAMING.

(no subject)

NCW
Victims

THE

VICTIMS OF GAMING;

BEING

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY

OF AN

AMERICAN PHYSICIAN.

BOSTON:
WEEKS, JORDAN & COMPANY.
NEW-YORK: JOHN S. TAYLOR.
PHILADELPHIA: JOSEPH WHETHAM.

1838.

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MOTT, SEPT. 28, 1911

THE

VICTIMS OF GAMING.

REMARKS ON PLAY.

SINCE the commencement of the present season of commercial distress, which, beginning with the merchants, has extended itself to all classes of the community, thus proving the mutual dependence of the whole, we have had a great number of economical projects broached, and a great many treatises upon frugality published. Thus we have had — "Living within the means," "Living up to the means," "Living beyond the means," "Living without the means," and "Living upon other people's means," all of which present

many useful practical hints, and have, no doubt, been of great benefit to the community.

There is one cause, however, of our present calamities, which is not, so far as I have observed, touched upon in either of these or any other similar work, unless it be in very general terms. This is PLAY, as it is usually called, but a sort of play which approaches much more nearly to gambling than is generally imagined. This is the true plague-spot which has, within a few years, extended itself over every class of society. From the grave legislator down to the humble operative, — lawyers, physicians, merchants, brokers, and mechanics of all sorts, have, in a greater or less degree, participated in this unhallowed and ruinous amusement.

No one, I believe, has any idea of the extent to which this evil prevails in our city. From certain facts which have recently come to the knowledge of the compiler, he has reason to believe that thousands of dollars are lost and won every day in Boston, and that too by a

class of persons who can in most instances but poorly afford to lose anything. This is one of the causes of the failure of our banks, of the stopping of our merchants, and of the general insolvency which prevails throughout the land. To this is to be attributed the frequent suicides which take place, and the more frequent absconding of persons supposed to be in good circumstances. I am not now speaking of the play of blacklegs, as they are called, but of persons generally considered to be of respectable standing.

This subject was brought to my attention in the following manner. I was called one morning to visit professionally a person who lived at the extremity of the city, with his mother. Upon my arrival I was shown into a decent apartment, where I found a young man apparently about twenty-five years old. His pulse and his countenance, on examination, did not exhibit the appearance of severe illness, and yet there was a wildness about his eyes, and a restlessness in his movements, which indicated

some serious disorder, either mental or bodily. Upon questioning him, I ascertained that he had been out late at a supper-party the evening before, and had been feverish and uneasy all night, and found himself unable to rise in the morning. Still he was unwilling to call in medical assistance, and it appeared that the anxiety of his mother had summoned me without his knowledge. I prescribed for, and left him, promising to call again.

About four o'clock the same afternoon, my engagements calling me into that neighborhood, I again visited him. He was relieved; but still it was evident that something pressed upon his thoughts, and that the foul bosom was loaded with that "perilous stuff which weighs upon the heart." I do not know what others think; but it has always appeared to me that Shakspeare could never have studied medicine, or he would not have said that, in cases of a diseased mind, "the patient must minister unto himself." These are almost always cases, even more than those of mere physical disorder,

where some one besides the patient must supply "the sweet oblivious antidote which will rase out the written troubles of the brain."

Such being my feelings, and as this young man, whom for the present I will call Hardspeed, had excited my interest by his appearance, I was determined to probe his disease, and, for that purpose, to take a night to reflect and call again the next morning. Accordingly I took my leave, after some general conversation.

The next morning the symptoms of mental uneasiness were more decided; his language was somewhat incoherent, and he exhibited indications of approaching derangement.

When we were alone, I plainly told him what I apprehended might be his difficulty, and that I could be of no use as a physician, but should be happy to do any service for him as a friend, which I could not do without a full disclosure of his feelings.

"Well," said he, "an exposure must come, an exposure which will doom me to disgrace

and imprisonment. It is this that I have been dreading; but not so much on my own account as on that of my mother,—my poor mother, who looks upon me as her only stay."

He then told me that his mother was the wife of a man who had formerly been an opulent merchant, and that she had been accustomed, both as his wife and before she married him, to every luxury; that his father died insolvent, leaving two daughters and two sons; that the daughters and one son had died, leaving their mother without property, or relative excepting himself. That Mr. Baldridge, a friend of his father's, had been very kind to him, and had offered him a liberal salary as his chief clerk; and being well acquainted with business he had taken the situation, and for one or two years had comfortably supported his mother and himself upon his pay. That about a year before, he had become acquainted with several other young men, clerks in the neighborhood, and they had formed a club for social enjoyment, meeting frequently to eat

suppers. That on one occasion cards were introduced, and gradually came to be the principal amusement of their evenings; that he had been cautious to bet very small sums at first; but getting insensibly interested, he had increased his stakes to sums much larger than he could afford to lose, and had at times been tempted to appropriate his employer's money, although not to any great amount; that about a week before I called on him, Mr. Baldridge had gone to New-York, and had directed him during his absence to collect certain bills, so as to have the money in readiness by his return.

It seems he had collected the bills, and, having no other money, had in an evil hour been induced to use it at the gaming-table, where it had been lost. Mr. Baldridge was expected home the next day but one, and then the matter could no longer be concealed. He concluded by saying that self-reproach and apprehension were the real causes of his disease, as I had at first suspected.

Having heard him through, and feeling as

if, by soliciting the disclosure, I had laid myself under some obligation to assist him with my advice; having often heard of the character of his father as a worthy man; and feeling also the deepest sympathy for his unfortunate mother, I determined to use all my exertions in his favor, more especially as, from my conversation with young Hardspeed, I was satisfied that he was thoroughly convinced of the dreadful consequences of gaming, and that, excepting in this instance, he was altogether faultless. I could promise my assistance, too, with more safety, because I had long been intimately acquainted with Mr. Baldridge, and had practiced for years in his family.

Somewhat comforted by my assurances, I left him, promising to see his employer immediately on his arrival in town. As this account is merely introductory to the stories which follow, I need not detain my readers with the particulars of my interview with Mr. Baldridge, who returned next day. He was a truly humane man, and upon my disclosure of the cir-

cumstances to him, he readily agreed to overlook Hardspeed's misconduct, and even, should he exhibit satisfactory evidence of reformation, to continue him as heretofore in his service. We arranged to meet at the sick chamber of the young man the next day, when, after a full and free conversation upon the subject, Mr. Baldridge, having admonished him of the dangerous and fatal nature of the propensity he had yielded to, concluded by an offer of full forgiveness and restoration to his favor.

Hardspeed, as might have been expected, was grateful for this generosity, but to our astonishment declined acceding to it. He gave as a reason for his refusal, that he did not wish again to expose himself to temptation. He knew his own weakness, he felt the force of habit, and feared that the dreadful infatuation had gained such hold of him that nothing but a complete removal from all temptation would secure him. With this view he entreated Mr. Baldridge, instead of taking him again into his counting-room, to procure for him a situation

on board a whale-ship, where long absence at sea, and complete separation from all opportunity to return to his ruinous amusement, would afford the best chance for his overcoming his weakness. Pleased with his diffidence of himself, which seemed to us to be the best pledge of his sincerity, we both acquiesced in his proposition, Mr. Baldridge agreeing to be on the lookout for a suitable opportunity to comply with his request.

During the two or three weeks while he was waiting for a voyage, I had frequent opportunities to converse with him, and at these interviews he made me acquainted with many particulars in relation to the extent to which this vice of gaming was pursued in Boston, and related to me the histories of several individuals who had been entirely ruined by it. Some of these cases were within his own knowledge; others had been told him, but under such circumstances as left no doubt of their truth on his mind. In some instances which he communicated to me, where the parties

were no longer living, he disclosed the real names of the persons; but where they were living, or had friends whose feelings might be injured, his notions of honor prevented him in most cases from giving their names; at the same time, however, he gave me free permission to make public any part or the whole of his disclosures for the benefit of the community, and as a warning not only to parents and masters, but to all young persons who like him were addicted to an indulgence with the fatal nature of which they were ignorant.

Shortly afterwards, Mr. Baldridge secured to him an opportunity to go to sea under the most favorable circumstances, one half of his pay being paid in advance to his mother to support her during the absence of her son.

Hardspeed has now been several months at sea, and in obedience to his request, as well as from a sense of duty, the following stories are communicated to the public. It may be remarked that one or two others are added which were derived from a different source, but one

equally entitled to credit, and that I have in my possession numerous other stories, all more or less illustrating the same vice. Indeed, histories enough, showing the dreadful extent of this moral evil in this city, might be easily collected to fill volumes. It may be that some of the persons, whose story are here given under fictitious names, will be recognized; undoubtedly some of those incidentally alluded to will be known to themselves or their immediate companions; but if, as Miss Martineau says on another occasion, every one will keep his own counsel, there is no danger that the reputation of any one will be injured.

To injure the feelings or character of any one is far, very far, from being the object of the editor. If it were his wish to do so, he has it abundantly in his power by means of such facts as have been communicated to him. It seemed to him important that these stories should be made known, that the public might be aware of the vast amount of evil existing in concealment, so that if possible some meas-

ures might be taken to put a stop to the ravages of a disease more fatal than the plague, the small-pox, or the cholera.

The misfortune is the greater, because the victims are wholly unaware of its magnitude or its character. As I remarked before, these persons of whom I am speaking are not blacklegs, nor do they generally associate with blacklegs. For instance, a party of respectable young men, each acquainted with the other, and all of them well-disposed, meet together to dine at a respectable restaurateur's, or at a hotel often of the first class. After dinner, cards are introduced; perhaps at first they amuse themselves without betting at all. They soon commence a small stake. The interest increases. They go on and double, until the feverish excitement becomes so great, that everything is forgotten, parents, friends, business, and reputation. In a word, they become so much interested that before separating they agree to meet again the next day; and so it goes on until what at first was but an occasional amusement, becomes at

length a constant occupation. In many instances, large sums are bet and lost; and let us see the consequences, first to the winner.

If one constantly wins, he soon thinks that fortune has taken him under her special care; finding his resources increased by this new occupation, he gradually neglects his employment. In fact, everything else becomes tedious and irksome to him. All this time, instead of husbanding and taking care of this new source of income, he feels so confident of continued success that what he does win is spent with the greatest prodigality. The theatre, jewels, horses, and if he have a family, furniture and dress, consume the fruits of this new calling, until extravagant habits are fixed, until his friends, finding he pays no attention to business, gradually desert him; and, to use a common phrase, he becomes good for nothing.

On the other hand, suppose he loses. In proportion as his losses become frequent, by a strange fatality, his dreadful eagerness becomes more furious. I have been informed by such

an one, whose story will be found in this volume, that under such circumstances he has for months together thought of nothing else sleeping or waking, at home or abroad — at church, when he went there, he was constantly devising some new scheme for skillful playing. Even his dreams were full of '*loo*' and '*brag*' and '*vingt un.*' Such a person can take no satisfaction in any rational pursuit; all his hopes, all his fears, all his desires, centre in the gaming table. The more he loses, the more anxious is he to play, to win back what he has lost. If he have means, he does not hesitate to hazard the last dollar. If he have none, then wo be to the person whose property is in his power. However sacred the trust, however needy and destitute the individual whose money he has in his hands — no matter if its loss involves the loss of reputation, of friends, or even disgraceful public punishment — all considerations are disregarded, and he goes on until perhaps self-destruction closes the scene.

But suppose in such a party no one wins or loses; that is to say, suppose that the persons composing it are so equal in their play and fortune that they win one day and lose the next. What then? Why the consequences are very little better as it respects the formation of a habit and the neglect of business, while they must still involve a loss of property. For instance, as has been related to me by a party concerned, a circle of young men commence early in the autumn to meet to amuse themselves at playing cards. They generally assemble about three or four o'clock in the afternoon, and remain usually until ten or eleven in the evening. In the meantime, a luxurious supper is ordered, with champaign and other expensive wines, the bill being about five dollars each. They continue in this manner until late in the spring, meeting about three times a week, sometimes oftener, sometimes not so often, say a hundred times in the course of the season. Here, then, is a clear loss of five hundred dollars from this cause alone.

It may be that this account will scarcely be believed, but the information comes from such a source that it cannot for a moment admit of doubt. Now, how many young men in business, or out of business, how many can afford this expense? It will be observed that I have here estimated only the actual expense of tavern bills, supposing that the losings and winnings are about equal, which by the way never is the case, because in almost every party there will be found some very skillful and cautious, and others very stupid or very careless; and it frequently happens, too, that the losers are the very persons who can least afford it. I also suppose that the play is fair, as I believe in most instances it really is, although cheating has been, I am told, sometimes much more than suspected. Indeed, how can it be otherwise, when to cheat is so easy, and when the temptation to do it is so great.

It may be thought strange that such proceedings can be carried on without suspicion. The truth is, that many of these men are not

housekeepers. They lodge at hotels and boarding-houses, and even when they live at private houses, a night key always admits them when their game is protracted to a late hour. But this is not often the case, because, to avoid suspicion, it is agreed to meet early in the afternoon, and separate at nine, ten, or eleven o'clock in the evening. In the meantime, those who have wives, or families, or parents, if questioned, never find any difficulty in making an excuse. A meeting of an engine company, or a military company, or a lyceum or other society, and sometimes even a religious meeting, is made an apology for not coming home to tea, and for absence during the evening. Any one will easily perceive that with the thousand societies, associations and engagements constantly occurring in a large city, it may be easy, without the slightest danger of detection, to make a satisfactory excuse, especially when the individual returns at a seasonable hour in the evening. I have been informed that in some instances young men have

satisfied their families that business was the cause of their frequent absence, and that persons have sometimes obtained credit for very assiduous and industrious attention to their particular calling, when in fact they have been spending the whole afternoon and evening in a pursuit the most calculated of all others to alienate the mind entirely from any steady employment.

There is every reason to believe that here is the origin of that prevalent disposition to speculate which has reduced so many individuals to ruin. What wonder that gambling should become a matter of business with men who have long ago acquired a taste for games of chance as an amusement? Is it surprising that persons should resort to speculations and to hazards, who have long found their greatest pleasure in watching and profiting by the caprices of fortune? The buying of a piece of land, or stock in a bank, or even of articles of merchandize, does not with such persons depend at all upon the intrinsic value of the

property, or the prospect of making a reasonable and an honest profit. All they think of is the chance of selling again to advantage, and it matters not to them how much the purchaser may be deceived. "Buy the devil and sell him again," is their maxim; and whether he is finally left in the hands of their dearest friends, or whether the purchaser is to be ruined by the trade, is a matter of perfect indifference to them — even although that purchaser be a father, or a brother, or a friend. It is to be hoped that the unfortunate result of recent speculations may prove a warning hereafter; but still, while such a disposition to gamble, whether on a large or small scale, continues prevalent, society cannot expect to remain long in a state of tranquility. If one bubble bursts, another will be created; and schemes and contrivances to grow rich at once, even though attended with a thousand contingencies, will always find dupes enough, who are either too lazy to work or too silly to see through the deception.

But to return to the more immediate subjects of remark, although, as I have before observed, many of the persons addicted to the indulgence of gambling are men of great respectability, yet nothing is more remarkable than the complete indifference which a confirmed gambler acquires as to the character of his associates. It is a vice that levels all distinctions. Often and often have there been assembled together at a card party, persons whose characters and occupations are the most diverse. There you may see the illiterate and the vulgar associated with the educated and refined. There you may see the old and the young. There, too, you may see men of eveery political party meeting as on common ground. Men, who never by any chance find themselves elsewhere in contact, meet without hesitation at the gambling house, and with the greatest familiarity laugh and joke and drink and smoke with those whom they would be ashamed to notice in the street, even by a bow.

Young men, the sons of the most influential and respectable citizens, find themselves by the side of persons of the lowest stamp and of the vilest character. This result happens in the following manner: for instance, a party are in the habit of assembling at a particular place. The party perhaps originally consists of six, eight, or ten. By and by some get run out, some are absent from the city, and now and then, some more fortunate than the rest awake to a sense of their extreme folly, and voluntarily abandon an amusement which they find likely to be attended with such disastrous consequences. By these means, those who are still bent on play find it necessary to procure other companions. Each one recruits from his acquaintances, and these acquaintances again from theirs, until finally a promiscuous set is made up of persons oftentimes entirely unacquainted with each other, even by name. A curious incident was related to me by Hardspeed as having occurred one night where he was playing, which was that of a

father and son being introduced by different individuals at the same table, to play for each other's money. The circumstance was so startling to each that they both of them determined from that moment to leave off play forever, and I believe that each, thus far, has strictly adhered to so wise a resolution.

The places where this amusement is carried on are various; generally they are hotels or restaurateurs in town. Sometimes they are out of town, in the neighboring villages. The landlords, in many instances are entirely ignorant of the extent to which the thing is pursued. A party, or club, as it is more often called, after a dinner or supper, call for cards to amuse themselves. They are furnished; and probably no very great scrutiny is made into the use to which they are to be put, whether fourpenny whist, or brag for thousands. In fact, the great respectability of many of the persons thus assembled is such that no landlord would for a moment imagine that anything could be done very much out of the way.

I shall not refer particularly to the places, because in fact the evil does not commence there. It is the state of society which is in fault, and a reformation must begin among individuals.

Let every mother and father examine strictly into the habits of their sons; let them more especially take some measures to ascertain where their evenings are passed. Let them require their regular attendance at every meal. Let every young wife who finds her fireside deserted, evening after evening, arouse herself at once, and satisfy herself of the cause of her companion's absence. Let every merchant or trader take some trouble to see where his clerks and apprentices are to be found between the hours of four o'clock in the afternoon and eleven o'clock in the evening, and let all night-keys as they are called, be destroyed, or taken out of the hands of all young men who have anybody to control them.

The above is no groundless alarm. By means of the facts in my possession, I could

prove all I have said by a direct reference to persons and to names, if I thought it would be justifiable. I could point out, for instance, a man of standing in large business, who has drawn checks for money lost at cards, to the amount of thousands in one night. I could point out persons who have played games of whist for thousands on a game. I could point out young professional men of the greatest promise, whose prospects have been ruined by gaming, and one or two in particular who have been obliged within two or three years past to leave the city in consequence of their excessive indulgence in play. I could point to some heavy failures which have occurred in consequence of gambling, where the parties were never suspected of anything of the sort by those who have suffered from their embarrassment. I forbear, however; let the following tales speak for themselves. My aim, as I have repeatedly intimated, is not to injure the feelings of any one, however worthless, but only to awaken the public mind to the dreadful

nature of the poison lurking at every corner, and pervading the whole mass of the social system.

I should be unwilling to call names for another reason. In many cases, those persons who have suffered most by these pernicious practices are comparatively young men who are the least blameable, while the older and more respectable persons who have associated with them, and whose example has perhaps persuaded them that their amusement was innocent, have by superior skill frequently saved themselves from loss, or if losers, have been able to afford the sacrifice, while their more simple associates have been ruined.

I have little or nothing to say about unfair gambling and cheating, although without doubt much of it is to be found even among those who call themselves respectable; but have confined myself to illustrating by the following tales the mischiefs of that sort of play which is by many considered innocent, and which is therefore much the most dangerous.

I have in my possession, prepared for me by Hardspeed, a minute description of the different games generally played, such as whist, loo, brag, &c.; but it appeared to me on the whole to be unwise to give lessons in vice while at the same time I was attempting to check it. I have therefore omitted this description, inserting only such particulars of games hereafter, as may be necessary to enable the reader more readily to understand the story.

AUGUSTINE ROBWOOD.

THE HISTORY OF

AUGUSTINE ROBWOOD.

Augustine Robwood was a native of Mooreland in the county of Worcester, Massachusetts, born of respectable parents, although they occupied a humble sphere in life. His father was a small farmer and a hard-working, economical man; his mother — the fit wife of such a man — was an amiable and industrious housewife. Besides Augustine, they had two daughters.

The village of Mooreland was one of those beautiful, secluded spots, embosomed in the hills, which once in a while waken in the traveler an emotion of such calm, serene and peaceful happiness. It was not on any great post-

road, and perhaps it owed somewhat of its quiet appearance to its remoteness from that bustle and excitement which always follow more or less in the train of your gay and glittering stage-coach. No such modern innovation had reached Mooreland. There no crowd of aspiring hostlers occupied themselves all day in trying the paces of some broken-down nag, or in patching and vamping up for sale some wornout hack. Here, in this peaceful village, no ambitious stable-boy amused himself by puffing a long-nine, or annoyed the neighborhood with the crack of a stage whip. No factory, with its busy wheels, its noisy looms, or revolving spindles, disturbed the repose of the scene. No grog-shop, with its thousand nameless annoyances and nuisances, polluted the natural as well as the moral atmosphere of the place. The village was situated, as I said before, among the hills. A quiet brook meandered through the valley, and on its banks, for half a mile or more, were scattered on a wide street some twenty or thirty rural dwellings.

At one end of the street stood the church, with its old-fashioned spire pointing to the sky, and its four sides ornamented — as the good villagers believed — with as many windows as could well be stuck into it, insomuch that it might without great impropriety be called a glass-house. An abrupt hill rose behind, and relieved it beautifully, I might almost say sublimely. The hill was precipitous on the side towards the street, and was covered with a thick growth of ancient pines, some of which, deprived of the bark and deadened by the lightning, nodded their bare and weather-beaten trunks in the wintry wind, and gave an air of dreariness and age to the scene, which contrasted well with the comfort which appeared to reign in the hamlet below.

One tavern, in the centre of the village, presented for a sign an Indian chief, — the same sign, which, although it had been repaired and varnished, had always hung out its modest welcome to the traveler ever since the days of early Indian warfare, when, on the banks of

that very brook, in the street of that very village, a desperate skirmish had taken place between the pilgrims and the aborigines. This skirmish was known by the name of 'Mooreland Fight,' to commemorate which, this rustic inn was built on the spot, although without this monument, tradition well preserved the history of the battle, and many of the neighboring cottages could show marks of the fight in the holes pierced by rifle balls.

Above and below the tavern, on the street, were scattered the houses of the villagers, mostly unpretending one-story edifices, having a cottage-like air; but if the houses were small, the same objections could not be made to the barns, which were generally of a large size, well shingled and protected from the weather, with each a row of sheds, to provide a sheltered barnyard for the stock in winter. Nor must we forget the mountain-like woodpile which adorned the enclosure of every house. O, ye who have never seen any fires but the smoking, bituminous Newcastle, or the sulphu-

reous, life-exhausting anthracite, — ye know nothing of the comfort of an ancient fire, — ye cannot comprehend what a world of good cheer, what visions of happiness arise from an old-fashioned woodpile, adapted to the wants of the equally old-fashioned chimney. I will not expatiate on this theme, so fruitful of many recollections. There stood the magnificent woodpile and the mighty barn and the snug and comfortable cottage. No more than two houses on the street could boast of paint. One of these was the doctor's, adorned with white; the other was a deep crimson red, odd-shaped, gamble-roofed building, owned and occupied by old deacon Jorum, who kept the only store in the village. How well are these scenes impressed on my memory! The stately spire of the church; the village-green in front, the village-churchyard behind,

"Where the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep;"

the spreading elms, over-arching the street; the old Indian chief, in front of which the annual

training attracted the attention of the whole village; the well-remembered hills around, fruitful of berries and of game; and old Ben Bailiff, the constable, whose office was almost a sinecure, and who, in addition to his civic duties, brought the mail once a week from the town of W. How old Ben would ride on his old mare, more especially when he brought a President's message or a Governor's speech, which the simple inhabitants of Mooreland were well content to receive about a month after they were delivered. Little they knew of expresses or railroad cars; they would have looked upon a story of a horse traveling ten miles an hour, very much as they would upon the account of Jack's seven-league boots, and considered it equally fabulous.

How well I remember the fuss all over town upon one occasion when Deacon Jorum was going down to the General Court, for he was always the representative; it would have been considered a sort of high treason to think of anybody else. The good people always voted

for him as a matter of course. Indeed it is probable that many people supposed he had a hereditary right to the office; the deacon himself always seemed to imagine that he had as decided a claim to it as to his house or his farm. On one occasion the deacon was persuaded to take Mrs. Jorum with him down to Boston, perhaps if I should say commanded, I should only repeat the common tradition of Mooreland, for it was a matter of notoriety in the neighborhood, that the deacon, great as he was, had a grey mare in his stable. Oh such preparations! such arrangements! It was the town's talk for a month before. Half the inhabitants of the village assembled opposite the deacon's red house to see them off. Ben Bailiff was to take them with the mail to W., where they were to get into the stage for the residue of the journey. For the purpose of escorting them with proper dignity, Ben had chartered an old-fashioned chaise at W., and had brought it over the evening before. It was such a vehicle as does not now exist, big enough for

three or four people, heavy enough for three or four horses. Oh the shouting of the boys, as Ben drove it into town from W.! His entrance into the village was quite a triumph. As W. was twenty miles from Mooreland, it was thought necessary to take a seasonable start, in order to arrive there before dark, so the chaise was drawn up about seven o'clock in the morning. First the capacious box was well stowed, then a long blue pine trunk brought out and corded on behind, then a chubby, square, red box tied on in front of the dasher, which was to answer for Ben's seat. Afterwards two or three old calimanco pockets, stuffed full of odds and ends, were laid in front, and finally old Madam Jorum herself, in all the glory of a plum-color lustring and red riding-hood over it, made her appearance, and after stopping at the door to give repeated charges to aunt Sarah and uncle Josh and the rest of the folks, she was duly lifted into the chaise. Then came the deacon attended by the minister and the selectmen. A proud day it was for Ben Bailiff as he trotted

his old mare off at the rate of three miles an hour. Every eye almost in the village following after and admiring the dignified equipage.

I will not detain my readers with any further description of the village, but only call his attention to one low-roofed cottage not far from the meeting-house. Nothing in its exterior distinguished it from the neighboring buildings. There was about it the same air of neatness and comfort which characterized the place. Here dwelt the minister, who, like Goldsmith's clergyman,

> "Was passing rich with forty pounds a year."

He was a venerable man at the time of which I speak, who presented all the dignity of age without its feebleness. Age to him was "like a lusty winter, frosty but kindly." He was about sixty-five years old. Here he had grown up, here he had administered the consolations of religion for upwards of forty years. The children of the parish seemed to him to be his

children, and he appeared to them, not the austere teacher, but the kind and benignant parent.

This clergyman had a daughter, the child of his old age. She was now fifteen. If I should undertake to describe the beauty of Emily Price, I should probably fall into some hackneyed description, and talk of a marble forehead and expressive eyes and finely rounded limbs, &c. &c., which after all would convey no image to the mind. In fact it is impossible to describe beauty. It is a something "which never was and yet is always," and the most lovely person that ever existed must derive something from the imagination of her admirers, in order to make her the perfect thing which a lover always fancies his mistress to be. I will not, however, go into a metaphysical argument on this subject, but appeal at once to everybody's experience of the different opinions which prevail in relation to this matter, which prove clearly that imagination must enter more or less into the notion which every one forms of beauty.

Emily Price was the last of five children, and the only remaining relative of the old clergyman. The rest of his children and his wife — look for them in the churchyard, and there you will see their graves marked by a simple white slab. Emily was his only remaining treasure — and not his only, for the whole people of the parish, all considered her their beauty and their pride.

My hero, whom I have left so long, was the lover of this beautiful and innocent girl — the son of Mr. Price's next neighbor. They had grown up together, they had played together on the green in their childhood, they had together rambled among the hills, and strayed on the banks of the river. The ripest berries, the brownest nuts, the sweetest flowers had Augustine even then gathered up for Emily. The good old minister, attracted by their innocent playfulness, had early taken notice of the blooming boy, and perceiving in him something, as he thought, indicative of uncommon talent, offered to give him the advantage of his books and instruction. The

parents of Augustine had intended him for a farmer, but proud of their boy, and flattered by the clergyman's offer, and in fact influenced by his advice—for the people of the parish considered the opinion of Mr. Price infallible — they yielded a willing assent to the proposition.

Mr. Price was fully satisfied with the progress of Augustine in his studies, and as his parents were not able to finish what the minister had begun, by sending him to college, it was determined that he should continue his literary pursuits in his native village until he could find some opportunity to obtain a profession.

This opportunity occurred when he was about eighteen years old. He had an uncle residing in Boston, who agreed, if Augustine could obtain a situation in an office where he could study law, that he would give him his board in his own family. Farmer Robwood immediately called on the minister, who advised him by all means to take advantage of the opportunity, as one too favorable to be

neglected, and the old gentleman accordingly concluded to strain his feeble means to promote the prosperity of his son; for to a man like Augustine's father, whose resources were so limited, even the trifling expense of his outfit was a serious consideration.

Sorely did the time of parting press upon his mother and sisters, and upon Emily. The love that in childhood had blossomed, maturity had strengthened. How could it be otherwise; although all their neighbors were good and honest, but few of them were blessed with cultivated minds. These two were the only intellectual companions of each other, of the same age. As to the good old man, Emily's father, he had no objection; the happiness of both was dear to him, and he saw no better way of securing it, than by uniting them together, and therefore cheerfully gave his consent to their union, whenever Augustine should have commenced business for himself with a reasonable prospect of success.

Once again the lovers wandered over each

scene so dearly beloved, so identified with all they knew of happiness. Alas! how little did either of them, or their friends, know of the perils, the snares, the temptations of the great world into which he was going! How little could they imagine the misery in store for them! Dangers, which to their unsophisticated minds were unknown, lurked everywhere around. Now, however, all was bright. True, the hour of parting was sorrowful, but hope appeared in the distance and presented a cheering prospect for the future. They could easily fancy that the time had arrived, when already an eminent lawyer, Augustine would come home to claim his bride, and remove her to a scene of splendor and magnificence, such as they imagined a city life to be.

The time of parting has come and gone. Young Robwood, by a fortunate accident, having obtained an introduction to an eminent lawyer of Boston, was permitted to complete his studies in his office, and such was his industry, fidelity, and attention to business, that

at the expiration of his term of study, his patron, a man of generous and liberal feelings, and disposed to assist a young person of merit, proposed to make him a partner. This offer was gladly accepted, and making only one condition, that he should be allowed to visit his parents and friends, he prepared to commence a career which he flattered himself would end in distinction and wealth, and, more than all, which would enable him to realize the dearest wish of his heart, that of a union with Emily.

For a time everything went well with Augustine. He was gradually acquiring a reputation. This will be properly appreciated by those who consider his obscure origin, his want of acquaintance, and more especially his deficiency of what is called a liberal education, which those who have suffered like him can only appreciate. It is difficult in a city like this to overcome prejudice. The most distinguished merit, particularly at the bar and in the medical profession where there is so much competition, rarely finds itself suitably reward-

ed, until advanced age; and life scarcely becomes an object worth living for, in a professional point of view, until it is almost at an end.

Notwithstanding all these discouraging circumstances, Augustine pushed his way forward among the foremost rank of those of his own age and standing. The following little incident will show his readiness and self-possession. He had been employed to sue a man notorious for his frauds and rascality, but under circumstances which made it seem almost impossible that the party could contest the debt. It was a note of hand. Unexpectedly, however, to him, the man, although he acknowledged that the note was signed by him and was genuine, yet insisted that he had paid it. He produced a witness of decent appearance who swore that he had paid the money for him. He was asked how much he had paid; he said $449, the amount sued for. He was further interrogated how he knew the precise sum; he answered that he counted it himself twice, and

then paid it to the claimant, who, on receiving it, said that he had left the note in his desk at home, but promised to burn it. Here seemed to be an end to the case. The witness thus unexpectedly introduced swore positively to facts, which if true not only defeated the action, but proved that Robwood's client was a swindler. A general feeling of indignation seemed to pervade the court-room. The lawyers, the jury, the spectators, all indicated their feelings by that indefinable sort of murmur which as clearly and decidedly speaks the opinion of an auditory, as if it were uttered in words.

It was now Augustine's turn to examine the witness. All eyes were turned towards him.

"You say you live with the defendant?"

"Yes."

"He gave you this money to pay the plaintiff?"

"Yes."

"How much was there?"

"Four hundred and forty-nine dollars."

"How do you know there was so much?"

"I counted it."

Having got thus far, Augustine coolly took from his pocket a roll of bills, handed them to the witness and requested him to count them. The witness took them with a confident air, examined the parcel, turned them over, and then replied—"There are one hundred dollars."

"Be sure you are right," said our young lawyer.

"I am sure," returned the witness.

"Hand them to the jury and let them see."

The foreman of the jury took the bills, counted them two or three times deliberately, and exclaimed "here are only $37." Upon which Augustine quietly rose and remarked,

"This is the case. Here is a large note. The party pretends he has paid it, yet, by a most extraordinary neglect, has left the note, the evidence of the debt, in the plaintiff's hands; and in order to prove its payment, produces a witness who swears that he counted

four hundred and forty-nine dollars, when you have seen distinctly that he cannot count thirty-seven, although he was warned to be careful and take time. Can you believe such a witness? Can you believe that a man who you see cannot count thirty-seven dollars, can count four hundred and forty-nine? Is it not clear that the whole defence is a fraud founded in dishonesty and sustained by perjury?" This was all his plea. It is unnecessary to say that the jury gave him the case without leaving their box.

It is very possible that lawyers may perceive nothing remarkable in the above related incident. I have mentioned it to show how promptly young Robwood met and restored a seemingly desperate case, and that too the first time he ever appeared before a jury.

Augustine after this time began to meet with great encouragement, and his efforts and attention to his profession deserved it. Indeed, such was his application, that he sometimes

returned to his lodgings fatigued and almost worn out.

On one occasion, entering his room late in the evening — for, since he had gone into business he had removed from his uncle's to an hotel — his room-mate proposed that they should amuse themselves with a game at all-fours. Robwood had never played cards, and was wholly ignorant of all games. His companion, a young merchant who boarded at the hotel to pick up country customers, expressed his surprise at his ignorance, and offered to learn him, and gave him several lessons that very evening. After this time it was remarked that our hero gradually returned earlier and earlier from his office, until at length he had almost ceased going there after tea.

The new amusement became very attractive to him; besides, he took it into his head that he had studied too hard and needed relaxation; as if three or four hours' constant excitement in card-playing were not more injurious to mind and body than the most steady application

to books and business. So it was, however.

At first he and his companion amused themselves alone in the retirement of their chamber, without playing to a late hour and not betting anything at all. By-and-by, one or two fellow-boarders were introduced, and then a small bet was proposed to make it interesting, as it was said. No one objected, and from this moment Robwood commenced a career which was destined to bear him on to ruin.

It was not long before the company which met at their room had so much increased, that it was thought best to assemble at some restaurateur's, or place more suitable to the entertainment of a party. The natural consequences followed, of more frequent meetings and more promiscuous company, until at last it often happened, that young Robwood found himself playing cards with persons with whom he would have been ashamed to be seen even casually speaking in the street. Other games were introduced, and a low game called loo was the particular favorite; and now a com-

plete change had taken place in Augustine's habits and thoughts. He was constantly restless and uneasy. He thought no more of Coke or Blackstone; his only topics of reflection were kings, aces and trumps. When he went out in the morning, he was not satisfied until he had engaged a party for the evening, and the evening party took precedence of every other engagement.

In the midst of this infatuation occurred the time for his annual visit to Mooreland, and to the friends whom he formerly loved better than anything else in the world, but who now, perhaps even without his knowing it, held a secondary place in his affections. As he descended, the day before Thanksgiving, the hill which overlooked his native village, and looked down upon the peaceful and tranquil scene which the vale presented to his view, he could not repress a feeling of remorse. The tear glittered in his eye, as his glance took in every well-remembered spot. He could not but perceive with regret the change which had come over his feelings, when he reflected how often

home and all its joys, how often Emily and his sisters and his parents had been forgotten amid the excitement of his too frequent indulgence in play. As he thus considered the past, the present, and the future, he mentally resolved never again to touch a card. Happy if at that moment he had been removed forever from temptation; happy if he had left all the prospects which the world calls brilliant, and sought in the bosom of his native valley that innocent occupation, which, although it does not acquire for its votary either renown or wealth, yet yields to him serenity, health and competence. How few comparatively are aware of their own weakness! How few are convinced that the best security against doing wrong is to deprive themselves of the opportunity of doing it.

Having thus, as he supposed, fortified himself against the possibility of returning again to his old habits, he congratulated himself on the strength of his resolutions, and as his losses had not been great, and his health was still unimpaired, he was again happy, and was

enabled to meet with a cheerful smile the glad welcome of his friends.

His stay at home was short, but his visit was pleasant to himself and to his friends. They perceived nothing but ripening promise in his appearance. All the accounts they had heard of him were flattering. They saw nothing of the worm which in secret was gnawing at the very foundation of his character. Externally he was the same, or rather he was much improved, and they were led to believe that in a year or two he would be enabled to marry, and to settle for life.

For several weeks after his return to town, Augustine was remarkably attentive to his business. The thought of home and of his friends seemed to operate like a good genius in preserving him from evil.

It should have been mentioned that just before his departure from home, his father had remarked to him, that he had accumulated about a thousand dollars, the earnings of his whole life, which he wished to invest in some

safe security for his daughters. Said he, "deacon Jorum has had it all along, but he is getting old and is about giving up business, and I must put it somewhere else. I wish you to take it and put it into some safe bank." Augustine promised to do so, and on his arrival at Boston purchased some stock with the money, but, for convenience of receiving dividends, had it entered in his own name.

It was but a short time after his return, before he found himself again frequently tempted to play; but for a while he resisted, until in an evil hour one stormy evening, he suffered himself to be persuaded to go again to a meeting of his old associates. The ice once broken, the first step taken, the force of old habit returned as strongly as ever. It seemed as if the current of his inclinations having been for a time dammed up, had at last broken over every restriction, and poured itself out with renewed violence. In vain did conscience whisper, in vain did some small remains of principle interfere, to check the destructive

torrent. He at first resolved to play only one evening a week, afterwards only twice a week; but, in spite of all his resolutions, night after night found him still seated by the side of the gaming table.

Another vice was gradually creeping upon him, and that was intemperance. At the meetings of the club, whatever the fortune of the game might be, drinking seemed to be a necessary incident of all its fluctuations. If an individual were lucky, then he must drink on account of his success; if he were unfortunate, then he must drink to keep up his spirits. An argument for drinking was thus found on all occasions, and Augustine, beginning life with an utter abhorrence of drunkenness in all its shapes, was soon in a fair way to become a complete sot.

This sort of life, as my readers may imagine, could not long continue. Even the tavern expenses for liquor and entertainment, if there had been an entire equality in playing, would soon have drained the scanty purse of our hero.

When his own money was gone, he, at first with great reluctance, began to appropriate the money in his hands belonging to his clients. At last he acquired a habit of considering it as his own, and as he generally collected money which would not be immediately called for, he sustained himself for a while without much difficulty. Yet even this resource at last failed him.

On his way to the place of meeting one night, he stopped at the post-office, where he found a letter containing several hundred dollars, which had been sent him as attorney for one of his friends. He put it into his pocket-book in his haste to join his party, and, meeting with very ill luck, had risen to go home at rather an early hour, when accidentally putting his hand into his pocket, he recollected the letter full of money. He took it out and used it without scruple, in the hope of retrieving his fortune. This was not to be. The devil generally deserts his worshippers at the very moment when his assistance is most want-

ed. He lost a large part of the money. The next morning, quite unexpectedly, his client, to whom it belonged, happening to be much in want of money called upon Robwood to make inquiries. He could not with safety conceal that he had received it. The next mail might convict him of falsehood. He unhesitatingly therefore gave his check for the money, merely stipulating that the check should not be presented until twelve o'clock, which the gentleman readily and without suspicion promised. As soon as he had left his office, Augustine stepped out, found a broker, and sold — what? Not anything of his own. He had nothing. He sold a part of the sacred deposit of his sisters, which still remained in his name. Not being able to delay the sale, he was forced to submit to whatever terms were demanded, and sacrificed it at a sum considerably below its value.

The aggravation of his feelings may be imagined, when, a week or two afterwards, the same bank paid a dividend of four per cent.,

which he thus lost, besides the sacrifice at the sale. Nor was this all. It seems that his friends at home had found out that their stock paid a good interest, as will appear by the following letter from his sister, which one of his old neighbors brought him three or four weeks afterwards.

"DEAR GUS:

"You must put away for a moment your writs and your papers and your musty books — which I call nonsense and which you call business — and attend to a letter from your little sister, which is much more important than courts and constables. You must know that father was at W. the other day, where, stopping at the great hotel, he came across a Boston newspaper, which mentioned that our bank stock had paid, as near as father could calculate by the account, forty dollars for six months' interest — and you, we never expected but thirty: many thanks to you for taking so good care of our money. By the way, why didn't

you write us about it? but I suppose you intended to keep the good news till you could tell it yourself. Well, we girls have concluded to get us new winter dresses with the money; and, as it turns out more than we expected, and as we consider dear Emmy Price the same as a sister, we wish you to get three red merino dresses for her and us, and a black merino for mother. We suppose they will not exceed ten dollars apiece. Now be a good boy, dear Gus, and make haste. Col. Amariah Darling, who carries this letter, and who has gone up to town to see about getting deacon Goulding's great legacy from England, is coming back Wednesday, and you must do our shopping right off, and send by him, because next week Thursday is Thanksgiving, and we want the gowns to wear to meeting; besides, Sally Downing is going to be married to Zek Snow, and they are to have a great dance; so you must not forget. Emily is well; but we did not say anything about writing, because we wanted to surprise her. Father is well, too;

but he is busy in getting in his pumpkins; the frost has already touched some of them. As for mother, she is up and about, all over the house at once, getting ready for Thanksgiving, and baking pies for you. You may depend upon it, we shall feast you well when you get home; but that will be nothing to the feast of love in seeing our dear brother, who is still, as ever, the darling of his sisters, and especially of SARAH.

"P. S.—Mother has left off baking long enough to tell me to charge you not to take the first price, but to go round and inquire, and get the gowns as cheap as you can, and mind and make the shop-keeper throw sewing silk into the bargain. Dear Gus, if you know a nice dress-maker, do bring us the pattern of a sleeve, there's a dear; old Keziah Spindle, you know, the mantuamaker here, can scarcely tell a skirt from a waist."

I have copied this letter entire, because one familiar letter, written in the unrestrained con-

fidence of friendly regard, will speak more fully of the feelings, habits, and indeed of the whole history of a family, than volumes could otherwise unfold. How sharp was the agony of Augustine, as he read the lines traced by the hand of his beloved sister, and felt how utterly unworthy he was of all the amiable affection thus lavished upon him, — how unworthy of the fond tenderness of his mother, who, even while he was engaged in scenes of willful dissipation, was making preparations for his comfort. How sadly should he disappoint the hopes of all those dear beings whose whole earthly happiness centred in his prosperity! He immediately repeated the former operation, sold a share of stock, purchased the dresses, wrote a few hasty lines, and sent the whole agreeably to his sister's request.

The reader can imagine how transient are all good resolutions, how unavailing the admonitions of conscience before the promptings of this dreadful infatuation, which now fully possessed Robwood, when I tell him that very

evening found him again at his old haunts, and for the first time he was carried home wholly intoxicated. The necessity, however, of preserving a decent appearance at home at the approaching New-England festival, imposed some restraint upon him. He would gladly have avoided going. His heart was no longer in his native hills; but some remains of good feeling operated upon his mind. He would not disappoint the expectation of his friends, more especially as he knew of no good reason to be given for such neglect.

At this visit, the alteration in his character had become too great to be any longer concealed. All his friends remarked the change. His sisters and parents attributed it to the pressure of business. Emily could not be so deceived; sad forebodings occupied her mind; and although he treated her with his usual attention, her affectionate heart could not so be satisfied. Indeed, the gossips of the neighborhood, mingling some error with their regard for poor Emily, were heard to whisper, that if

Emily Price ever intended to be married to Augustine Robwood, she had better secure him, for he would otherwise soon pick up a more eligible match in Boston.

I will not dwell much longer on the tale. This was the last visit Augustine ever made to Mooreland. On his return to Boston, his habits became soon too notorious to escape observation. His generous patron remonstrated with him, and for a time it seemed with some success; but the love of play, and also the love of drink, were too strongly fixed ever to be eradicated. Upon a recurrence of his old vices, Mr. G. would no longer continue a connection which was injurious to his business.

The subsequent progress of the poor gambler and drunkard — for he had now become both — was rapid. No one employed him: no one any longer had confidence in him. The poor remains of his sister's fortune were squandered away; and gradually he became reduced to actual want. His old companions abandoned him; he had become too degraded even for

them to associate with. He was actually in want of bread. His pride was too great to permit him to apply to his friends. His wardrobe was sold piece by piece, and too frequently the largest portion of the price went to the gin shop; until, finally — a miserable, shabby, ragged object, the ghost of his former self — he wandered about the corners of C. street, until one morning he was picked up dead. It was said he died in a fit; but a post-mortem examination satisfied the physicians that the immediate cause of his death was starvation. This fact was not known to his friends, who continued in happy ignorance of the extremity of his sufferings, as well as of the extent of his dissipation. They could not, however, be entirely deceived. The loss of all the money entrusted to his care, the constant demands of petty creditors upon his father, and indeed the state of his clothing, which indicated the lowest poverty, could not fail to unfold to them the horrible story of the unworthiness of this object of their admiration and affection.

Time has somewhat assuaged the grief of his parents and sisters, although it has been said that the old lady has never been herself since his death. As for Emily Price — go to the little church-yard of Mooreland, and there you will find her humble monument and that of her venerable father, both of whom may be literally said to have been the victims of the unhallowed and ruinous vice of play.

EZRA DRIVER.

EZRA DRIVER.

Ezra Driver was born in the town of Rockwater about twenty-five miles from Boston. He received a good education, and at about the age of twenty-two engaged in the business of school-keeping. Finding however that his health was impaired by the confinement of this occupation, he removed after a few years, to Boston, where he entered into business. He was now married and had a family, besides which his mother resided with him. Often have I seen him, his aged mother leaning on his arm, walking reverently to church on the Sabbath; and his character was then in every respect unimpeachable.

An interesting incident in his life, which occurred soon after his removal to Boston,

ought to be mentioned in consequence of its connection with his subsequent history. It also indicates clearly that at this time his reputation for integrity was such that the greatest confidence was reposed in him. On one occasion when Driver was going from Rockwater to Boston, he was entrusted with a large sum of money by a friend. It was nearly night when he set out, and unfortunately it commenced snowing before he had proceeded many miles, and in so violent a manner as almost to obstruct his sight. Although familiar with the way, yet in passing through a piece of woods, he had, before he was aware of it, turned from the main road into a by-path used by the neighboring farmers to draw out wood, and in vain attempts to recover the proper road, wandered about the forest for two or three hours.

Fatigued, wearied, and almost overcome by the snow which now fell in freezing volumes, he began to apprehend that he should perish with cold, when his eyes were agreeably struck

with the glimmer of a light which appeared to proceed from the window of a hut at no great distance. He followed and finally reached it. It was then about ten o'clock. Dismounting he knocked at the door, which was readily opened. He entered, and perceived that the house consisted of two rooms, separated from each other by a passage way which ran through it. A loft overhead running the whole length of the building was entered by a ladder and a trap-door. A bright, cheerful fire gratified the almost perishing traveler. Within the room were three men and two women, whose appearance indicated a father, mother, two sons, and a daughter. Everything betokened the circumstances of a comfortable, although poor farmer. They willingly consented to afford him a night's lodging, and one of the sons went out and took charge of the horse, who found shelter in a back shed, whither his master accompanied him, to see to his comfortable accommodation after the fatigue of the journey.

After a hearty supper, Driver was conducted

up the ladder, through the trap-door, to bed. His suspicions, thus far, had not been excited; but before undressing, he went to see if the door could be fastened, when he perceived that it had been secured from below. He then recollected that after taking off his surtout, he looked into the pocket, to take out his bundle of money, and that while doing so, upon turning round suddenly, he had observed the father and eldest son exchange looks. He scarcely noticed it at the time, but now the whole scene returned to him, and he could not doubt but that a plan had been devised to rob and probably to murder him. His first thought was to draw up all the moveable articles of furniture in the room and press them down on the door, but the futility of such a scheme was obvious. Here he was, remote from assistance. Suppose he kept the villains out for a night, would his chance of escape be better in the morning? It seemed clear that he was in their power, and that he must trust to his ingenuity rather than to force for a release. Fortunately

he had taken with him a pair of pistols, both of which were charged, and on which he could rely. While he was armed, he could not wholly despair. At any rate he had the melancholy satisfaction of knowing that he could at least take life for life. Afraid to make much noise, he examined carefully his lodging room, and the window first; he found this to be nothing but one little sash of four small panes of glass, through which it would be impossible to squeeze himself, even if it had been open, but it was fastened, and the ground was at least fifteen feet below.

The bed was in a remote corner of the room under the roof, and near the trap door was the chimney, and upon these two circumstances he planned a scheme, which, if it did not promise absolute safety, was the best he could manage, and afforded some hope of escape. He placed his night-cap on the end of one of the pillows, and laid it in the middle of the bed partly under the clothes, the top just appearing above the coverlet resting on the other

pillow, so as to give it the appearance of a man, and at the same time raised the bedding so as to represent as nearly as possible a human body, which he accomplished so well that seen by the dim light of a lamp the deception would not be easily detected. He then took a pistol in each hand and posted himself behind the chimney, so as to be concealed from any one opening the door, and yet near enough to take advantage of that mode of leaving the chamber. Here he watched, while seconds seemed minutes, and minutes appeared to be hours. It was cold on that wintry night, but he did not feel it. At length, after remaining in this condition four or five hours, as he thought, although probably in fact not more than one or two, he heard footsteps approaching beneath. The door was then slowly and silently raised, and the faint glimmer of a lamp shone through it. Presently a head rose above the opening, then another, and finally the father and eldest son climbed up into the loft, the former having a common axe in his

hand, the latter a crowbar. After getting up, the father turned round to see that his son was up also, and then both crept softly towards the bed, leaving the lamp near the door. When they had arrived close to the bed, and were then both more than twenty feet from Driver, who, it may easily be imagined, watched their movements with trembling anxiety, stole to the door, descended, and secured it after him.

It was true, he could not expect that they should long be ignorant of his escape, because the noise he made in getting down startled them, and besides they soon ascertained that the blows they inflicted descended on an empty bed. The door, however, was very strong, and was fastened by an iron bolt which made it perfectly secure, at least for a short time, without assistance from below; that assistance could easily be obtained while the other son remained at liberty. In fact, Driver found him at the foot of the ladder on the watch. He also was armed; but at first, supposing the person descending to be his father returning

after the accomplishment of the murder, he did not attack him until he had placed his feet on the floor. Then the contest commenced, which however was quickly terminated by the discharge of a pistol, which took effect in the head of the robber, and effectually prevented any further obstruction from him. There were still the two females in the house, whom, although they seemed to rejoice at his escape, he did not dare to trust, but took the precaution to secure one of them with a rope while he compelled the other to go with him to the shed, whence, after taking his horse, he proceeded to find his way to the road, to which she guided him, induced partly by threats, partly by entreaties. Time was indeed precious, although the sullen tempest howled through the leafless branches of the forest; still, loud above the roaring of the wind was heard the repeated blows of the axe, with which the villains were endeavoring to cut through the trap-door in order again to attack their intended victim.

He was soon out of their reach, for he found that the road was much nearer than he had supposed; and that, blinded by the snow, he had on the previous evening been wandering round and round within a few rods of the proper direction.

His first proceeding was to procure an officer with proper assistance to endeavor to arrest the villains; but upon returning to the cottage, it appeared that they had succeeded in cutting through the door, and had thus been enabled to abscond. As the place was very near the coast, it was supposed they had got into a boat and perished at sea in a storm — as they were tracked through the snow to the water's edge, and as all search for them proved fruitless. Driver delivered his money in safety, and was generously rewarded for the hazard he had run on account of it by its owners. The fact of his being entrusted with this large sum of money, shows what his character for honesty must have been at this time.

Driver had not long lived in Boston before

he was one evening invited by a friend to join a supper party, at which, after the entertainment was over, the company commenced to amuse themselves with cards. The game they selected was brag, which, as its name imports, is a game at which success depends very much upon keeping up the appearance of a good hand, and by that means bragging off, as it is called, your adversary or adversaries, as the case may be; for any number can play at it, although five is the most convenient number. The one next to the dealer puts up into the pool, one dollar, or two, or three, or indeed any sum he may choose, unless the amount has been previously fixed by the company. This sum is called the ante. The deal then commences, the dealer giving to each player three cards. The person who puts in the ante first looks at his cards, and if dissatisfied with any of them, has a right to take one, two, or three more, as he pleases, first throwing down from his original hand as many as he intends to take in, so as still to leave in

the hand three cards. After his hand is made, the next in order looks at his hand in the same manner, and determines whether he will go in or not. If he goes in, he must put into the pool as much as the ante, and may also have the privilege of exchanging his cards. If he throws up his hand, he has nothing to do with the game for that deal. The players go round in rotation in making their hands. After all are made then commences the betting or bragging as it is called. It should be mentioned that there are no trumps, and no taking of tricks. Every nine-spot and every knave is called a bragger. All the other cards rank as at whist. The effect of a bragger is to assimilate all other cards; thus, an ace and two braggers, or one bragger and two aces, is the same as three aces, and so on. The best hand is three natural aces, the next best hand is two natural aces and a bragger, which makes it three aces. The next best is one ace and two braggers, which also counts as three aces, and is only inferior to the other two, because the

others have natural aces in them. The hands go on in this order, kings coming next, then queens, &c.

The interest of the game does not at all depend upon the goodness of the hands, but upon the boldness of the players; thus, if I, being the first player, brag or bet at once fifty dollars or one hundred dollars on my hand, the other players after me may naturally suppose I have a very strong hand, and decline taking my brag, and throw up their hands, in which case I am not obliged to show my hand; but being acknowledged best by all the players, I am entitled to all the money in the pool, even though my hand may be the very poorest in the pack. My adversary, after I have bet, may take it, in which case he puts the amount into the pool. He may then brag himself any sum he thinks proper, placing always whatever he bets on the table, which bet I also may take and return again, and so on, until one of the players bolts, that is, throws up his hand, or calls a show of hands, which the last player

always has a right to do after he has taken his adversary's bet, in which event, the best hand shown takes all the money. If more than two stand their hands, each in turn must take the bet, or throw up his hand, in which case he forfeits all right to the pool. It is seldom, however, that more than two brag to any extent, for when it is discovered that any two are determined to brag, all the others generally throw up their hands.

From this sketch of the game, it is evident that coolness and indifference are the best qualifications for playing it. Driver's calm and quiet countenance fitted him for such a game. His eye gave no indication of the character of his hand, whether good or bad, and he would often by this means continue the bet backwards and forwards to an enormous amount, and finally brag his adversary off, by the magnitude of his bet, and thus win the pool, when it has been discovered that his adversary had by far the best hand.

I will not enter into the particulars of his

life. It is sufficient to say that for several years he continued playing more or less at this game, and almost constantly winning. It was thought by many of his companions that he supported himself by the proceeds of his good luck. He certainly had every opportunity to avail himself of his skill, for there were in the party, which from time to time assembled in the place he frequented, several young men of the greatest expectations, and some, who, however they came by it, always had large sums at their command. Names of persons who enjoy in the highest degree the confidence of this community, might be mentioned, who lost large amounts, and whose presence at such a a place, and for such a purpose, would astonish all their acquaintances. Two or three might be named, who were nearly ruined by this game.

Driver, although he retained the appearance of business, did little or nothing but play. His good fortune was not destined to continue forever, as he sometimes seemed to imagine it

would. In the year 183–, a new associate was introduced to his acquaintance, who could play brag better than he could, and who used him as a sort of sponge, for he did not come often. He would allow Driver for a week or two to soak up the money of poorer players, and then, at one sitting squeeze him of every cent. In fact, after a while, he not only stripped him of his winnings, but got into his hands all his property, and besides had advanced him considerable sums on loan. He thus had him completely in his power, and when that was accomplished, began to unfold his ulterior designs, of which his unfortunate dupe had not before the slightest suspicion.

Fathom, for that was the villain's name, it seems belonged to a gang of rogues, who subsisted by house-breaking and counterfeiting, and who were constantly on the watch for prey. They were very much in want of a comrade of good character, by whose agency they might get rid of their bad money, and who could render them other assistance by

means of the confidence which the public had in his honesty. Fathom, one evening after the play was over, told Driver that he had two or three boxes which he wished to entrust to his care. This was readily agreed to, and that same evening after eleven o'clock, the boxes were brought to Driver's house, who was surprised at their transportation at so late an hour, but did not entertain any suspicion of mischief.

A day or two after this, Driver asked Fathom to lend him some money; to this the other assented, provided Driver would take certain bills which he showed him, and which he at once discovered to be counterfeit. He charged him with the fact, which Fathom at once admitted, but said he, "you must take some of them and get them off."

"What," said the unfortunate man, "pass counterfeit bills? No, never!"

"Yes, but you will, though, for you are in my power," returned Fathom.

"Your power!" answered Driver, indignantly. "Do you suppose that because I am

in your debt I am going to submit to your villany?"

"Not on that account entirely," rejoined the other, "but because you have stolen goods in your house, which you have retained there several days. Those boxes contain plate which was stolen from Mr. D.'s house; and unless you submit to the conditions I impose, I will immediately lodge an information against you."

Poor Driver, if he had reflected, might have easily extricated himself; but in the trepidation of the moment, occasioned by finding himself so nearly connected with rogues, he agreed to do what was desired of him. That very night he went home, and his family being absent from town, being curious to examine the contents of the boxes to be sure that Fathom had not deceived him, he broke them open, and found them filled with silver plate. He had not yet used the counterfeit money,—necessity pressed him. He did not dare to pass the bills; and upon the whole concluded that

it would be easier and less hazardous to make use of some of the plate which he found in the box, more especially as the mark corresponded with the initial of his own name, which he thought would secure him from detection. He accordingly, driven to desperation by the want of money, selected a silver can, which he took to a manufacturer one evening and offered for sale. It was purchased without suspicion, and the money paid to him. While the vessel laid on the counter, a lady happened to come in, who exclaimed, "There is the coat-of-arms of my friend Mr. D. Where did this come from?" The shopman, who had bought the article for old silver, and was about to melt it up, in reply to her question, related the circumstances under which he had bought it, when he was informed by her of the robbery of her friend, and requested to keep the can and endeavor to discover the person who had sold it to him. This was not difficult; for although the silversmith did not know Driver's name, he met him

often in the street, and by watching, soon afterwards again discovered him, and found out his name, in consequence of which an information was lodged against him and a warrant issued for his arrest.

The day after the warrant was given to the officer, about one o'clock he encountered Driver near the post-office, just getting into a chaise. The officer jumped in with him, and at that moment he was observed to drop something upon the ground, which, upon being picked up, proved to be the very bills which he had a few days before received from Fathom, and which as a last resort he had taken out that morning to pass. Well knowing the officer, but for the moment forgetting all about the plate, he concluded that the counterfeit money was the object of his arrest, and in the attempt to throw it away thus discovered what before was not suspected.

Driver was soon afterwards brought to trial, and although defended by the ablest counsel,

was in due time convicted and sentenced to a long imprisonment.

All search for Fathom, whose name as his associate his victim at once disclosed, was vain. He had been on the watch, and was immediately aware of Driver's arrest, and at once made his escape. While our unfortunate hero was in jail after his conviction, he received one morning the following letter: —

"SIR — Do you know who I am? You will doubtless answer, yes. This is the handwriting of Fathom. Still you are mistaken; for although I am Fathom in one sense of the word, yet I am not, since that is not my real name. Go back further. Do you remember the scene in the woods one winter's night, now several years ago, when you had lost your way? Do you recollect being sheltered in a cottage? Do you remember the events of that fearful night? Well, I am more nearly connected with those events than you imagine. I am one of the men who made an un-

successful attempt to rob and murder you. I am the oldest son. That night, that dreadful night, I lost my father and my brother, and by your cursed agency. I know you only acted in self-defence; but from that time I have hated you — from that time I have determined to ruin you. We were always poor, but until that night we had been contented and happy. We had never harmed, or injured, or defrauded any person; but when that ever-to-be-regretted temptation was presented to us, I know not by what wicked demon prompted, we seemed to be impelled onward by a destiny which we could not resist. You were alone, unarmed, as we supposed, and having, as we supected, money enough to make us forever independent. We thought the crime could be committed without the slightest chance of detection, and accordingly planned your destruction, which terminated in the sudden death of two of us, one of whom was comparatively innocent. My poor George, the youngest brother, used all his efforts in vain to dissuade

us from our dreadful design, and I firmly believe, if he could have done it without implicating his father and brother, that he would immediately have gone to the neighboring village and made known our scheme; and when he tried to stop you at last, it was no doubt to prevent our detection rather than to injure you. Alas, poor fellow! he fell the first victim. My father and myself, as soon as we had cut through the door, finding that you had already got beyond our reach, immediately put out to sea; but in so stormy a night no boat could live. We were swamped; my father sunk at once; I was thrown ashore, how I scarcely know, and contrived, knowing all the paths about the coast, the rocks, the marshes and the woods, to elude the officers of justice. I ran the less risk, because I was sure no one could identify me excepting yourself, who I thought could hardly know me again. From that time I have nourished the most deadly hatred against you, and determined, if it were possible, to work your ruin.

"I had lived in Boston, had had a decent school education, and among other things had been thrown in early life into a situation where I picked up a thorough acquaintance with all games of cards, and could play them honestly or dishonestly without any danger of discovery. At present, however, I did not think it safe to show myself in the city, and therefore obtained a long voyage. I was absent for many months; and on my return, thinking that several years, together with the hardships and exposures of a sea-faring life, had probably altered my countenance so much that you could not, from having seen me only at one short interview, easily identify me, I returned to appear in Boston.

"On my arrival in the city I had no difficulty in finding you out, and taking occasion to pass you in the street was gratified to perceive that you did not recognize me. I contrived to throw myself more directly in your way, but still you did not know me. Having before this time become acquainted with some others no

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better than myself, we had commenced operations as counterfeiters and house-breakers. From these resources I was enabled to command money, and to assume the appearance of a gentleman, in which garb I obtained an introduction to some of your associates, and finally contrived, as you know, to get you into my power. My first design was to ruin you at once; but I afterwards thought we might as well make you useful, and accordingly I determined to get off as much bad money as possible through your means, leaving it to chance to bring about your detection and punishment, which I did not think would be very long delayed, as the business of passing counterfeit notes is always hazardous, more especially to a green hand.

"You now know my motives. I have only to add, that your own folly and love of cards put it into my power easily to accomplish your ruin, which by ordinary means I might have found it difficult to effect without great danger to myself—at present I am perfectly

safe. No officer of the law can reach me. I am far beyond pursuit; and although I now begin to feel some compassion for your miserable and wretched condition, yet still I cannot help congratulating myself that it is you who are in prison and not FATHOM."

This letter did not afford Driver much consolation, although his feelings could not be much aggravated, for he saw himself reduced from a respectable situation in life, separated from his family, his children, and all his friends, by his own mad folly. What added a sharper sting to the bitterness of his grief was the thought that his children were to be forever disgraced by his misconduct. He had often, when riding by the prison with them, pointed out that place of crime. How would they feel hereafter in passing by the same place, to reflect that its gloomy walls enclosed a parent. To those walls he has been consigned. There he drags out a wretched, but, if rightly improved, not an unprofitable exis-

tence. It is to be hoped that his mind will be exercised with such salutary reflection, that when again he shall be restored to the haunts of society, he may at the same time that he is the sadder, be also a wiser and a better man.

THE FORGER.

THE FORGER.

Zephaniah Middleborough was a broker, who, although he had a numerous family, was enabled by his business honestly to support his wife and children, when, unhappily for himself and all who depended on him, he became associated with a club which met every night, or almost every night, at a well-known house to play brough loo. It is only necessary to say of this game, as any one acquainted with it will readily admit, that a large capital and extraordinary good luck are both necessary to success in playing it. Zephaniah had no capital; his daily bread depended upon his daily exertions. His commissions were moderate, but his employers were steady, and he could rely upon a support. In playing

he was at first very fortunate, and I believe it is notorious that beginners are almost invariably lucky. Indeed so much was he elevated by his gains, that he began to look to them as to a source of future riches, never reflecting that the persons with whom he associated were like himself generally poor, or at least far from being rich, and that if he should win all they had he would still be poor, nor that he would in all human probability experience the usual fickleness of fortune. He therefore surprised his friends and acquaintances with his generous living. Canvass-backs, turkeys, champagne and the best of old Madeira formed the staple of his bill of fare. From morning until night, gigs, buggys, coaches and saddle horses, were driving from or returning to his house. Every evening when not engaged with the club his family and himself made their appearance at one of the theatres, dressed as vulgar people usually are at public places, in the most extravagant and fashionable attire, and shining with the most tawdry and glittering

ornaments. His wife, an amiable but weak-minded woman, who knew nothing about her husband's circumstances, not only joined in his extravagant views, but even went beyond him in prodigality.

Middleborough had a brother who had been lame from his early youth, having been crippled by an accident in his childhood. He could do little or nothing for his support, and was almost an object of charity. About the time of Zephaniah's first successes at play, a maiden aunt had died, and taking compassion on this poor lame boy, had in her will left him a legacy, to be invested in the Life Insurance Office in the purchase of an annuity, thus insuring to him the means of a comfortable subsistence for the remainder of his life. Stephen, that was the brother's name, filled with gratitude to his generous benefactress, at once came to Boston and gave the money to his brother without the slightest hesitation, requesting him, as from his profession he must know all about such things, to purchase the

annuity. He then returned home to the country with an aspect of cheerfulness, such as he had never worn before. Perhaps it may have been remarked by my readers, that persons subject to any personal deformity wear an air of depression and melancholy which does not appear on the countenances of other men. I have been told and believe that an afflicting and mortifying sense of their own inferiority always oppresses them, and frequently makes their lives a burthen, not only to themselves but also to all around them. This is often the case with those whose circumstances enable them to retire from the gaze of the world; how much more then must it be a subject of constant and irritating reflection with those who are compelled to come in contact with the unfeeling, the rude, and unthinking, who, if they do not actually ridicule the deformity of a cripple, show by their looks and manners that they are thoroughly aware of the difference between him and themselves. Such having been the feeling of poor Stephen, one can

readily imagine how overjoyed he must have been at the certain prospect, as he esteemed it, of being independent for life, of being enabled to retire from the cold contempt of the world. He was extravagantly fond of books, and now, thought he, I will seclude myself in the retirement of some sylvan scene, and if not so happy as my more favored fellow-men, with books and the enjoyment and study of nature I may at least endure with cheerful content the affliction with which it has pleased Providence to visit me. Unfortunate young man! How little did he dream that all his fondly cherished visions of felicity were to be forever destroyed, and that too by the very brother whom he loved better than any creature in the world!

The very day on which Stephen had put into his brother's hands his all in this world, and which should have been considered by him as the most sacred deposit, Zephaniah had an engagement with the club. Flushed with the hope of success, elevated by an extra bottle of champagne, he entered the usual place

of meeting, and wishing to realize a large amount at one stroke, he proposed a stake unusually high: said he, "we have been trifling too long. It is unworthy of gentlemen to play at the low rate of a dollar — it will do for shop boys and mechanics, but we must act more liberally."

He then proposed that the pool should be made up by fixing the amount which each should put in at twenty dollars. There were six present — this made the first pool one hundred and twenty dollars, and being liable to be doubled, or indeed two or three times doubled, it in the course of the evening amounted often to several hundred dollars, and once got up beyond a thousand — for instance, at one time there were two aces and one knave turned up in dealing, after the pool was made; this increased it to four hundred and eighty dollars. When the money went off, three persons were looed, each of whom had to put into the pool as much as there was in it at the time of the loo, consequently the next pool was fourteen hundred and forty dollars.

Unfortunately for poor Stephen, being about to leave town that very afternoon, he had put his aunt's legacy into Middleborough's hands at dinner time, when it was too late to make the investment until the next day, so that he carried the whole sum with him in his pocket-book, and having at this time not much cash of his own, for his extravagant living kept him very short, he did not hesitate to use it. In the excitement of the game, almost before he was aware of it, he encroached upon this sum, and in fact when he rose from the table, every dollar of his brother's money was gone; by such conduct showing that the tenderest and strongest connections of friendship and nature will yield to the force of this resistless infatuation, for Zephaniah was not naturally a bad man, and unquestionably he dearly loved his brother.

It may be supposed that it was not without an overwhelming emotion of self-reproach that he reflected upon what he had done, the next morning; but it was too late. The mischief

was done. All that day, and the next, and the next, he was in a continual state of agitation; and if his misery had been salutary, and had induced him to break off at once from his bad habits, it is very probable, nay almost certain, that an undeviating course of steady industry might have enabled him to retrieve his losses, and to restore to his brother that which he had so cruelly and fraudulently taken from him. Unfortunately, such was not his determination. He concluded after a few days deliberation to write to his brother that the negotiation was settled; that the annuity was purchased, and that he would, from time to time, remit him the dividends, the first of which was not of course payable for some time to come. Knowing that his unsuspecting brother would never think of making further inquiry, he was now relieved from immediate difficulty, and had time to devise some scheme to meet the emergency.

Much alarmed at the dangerous situation in which he found himself placed, he had at first

made some strong resolutions against ever playing cards again; but after refraining for a few days from visiting the scene of his loss, habit at length proved too strong for resolution, and one night he again directed his steps to his former rendezvous, where he was hailed by his old companions with a cordial and sincere welcome, and soon forgot his anxiety for his brother's loss in the excitement of play. He was fortunate on this occasion, but not so much so as to get back a tenth part of what he had previously lost. Still the success, trifling as it was, served to blind his eyes to the fatal nature of the amusement, and only tended to confirm an old adage with which he and the other members of his fraternity, as well as many other gamesters, have comforted themselves, that money lost at cards is only lent, and will always sooner or later be repaid.

Thus he went on with various success, but gradually becoming poorer and poorer. His frequent losses, small in themselves, but great in the aggregate; his habits of expensive liv-

ing, and his proportion of the club expenses, reduced him at last to all sorts of shifts. From negotiating notes for his customers, he was soon driven to the necessity of raising money for himself. At first this answered tolerably well. Any man who has established a reputation for business habits, cannot fail of obtaining credit to some extent. He would borrow of one friend to-day, of another to-morrow. He would also contrive to obtain for himself the reputation of prosperity by repeating fictitious accounts of great speculations which he pretended to have made. It often happened too that a note or draft was left with him to get discounted, several days or perhaps a week before the money was wanted, so that he frequently was enabled to realize the proceeds, and retain them for some time in his own hands. This could not last long, however, more especially as the time had nearly arrived for the payment of the first dividend on his brother's annuity.

In an unlucky hour, driven to the last ex-

tremity, he had used all the money which he had raised on a note, which money he had promised the owner to furnish the next day before two o'clock. The next morning came. After a night of hopeless and restless anxiety he repaired to his office. He went from one to another of his friends and acquaintances, to borrow, for a week, for two days, for a day. But by this time the suspicions of his neighbors were awakened. His frequent want of money, the difficulty and tardiness with which he repaid what was loaned to him, had undermined and destroyed his credit. Eleven o'clock came, and still there was no relief—twelve o'clock, and no money—one o'clock, and yet he had not been able to obtain a cent by all his exertions. Wearied by his long and fatiguing walks, agitated at the thought of the discovery which his customer must necessarily make if the money were not forthcoming, he sat in his shop, the perspiration streaming from his brow, and his heart beating with apprehension. One hour, and the blow must fall; a

blow which he too well knew must be fatal to his business, to his reputation, and for aught he knew to his liberty. While he was in this situation, in came Mr. B., his employer, and addressed him thus —

"Well, Mr. Middleborough, I will take that one thousand dollars now, which you obtained for me the other day."

Desperate with the extremity to which he was driven, the devil prompted Zephaniah to use an artifice to relieve himself from his present difficulty, only to plunge him still deeper into distress. All at once assuming a cheerful and contented air, he answered, "I have no money for you."

"Why, what have you done with it?" was the immediate and anxious interrogatory.

"You must know," said Zephaniah, "that I had been to the bank and drawn out the money, so that it might be ready for you, when in came a man with one of the best notes in Boston for twelve hundred dollars; he said he had tried everywhere to get one thousand

on it for six months, and could not succeed, and that he would sell it for one thousund dollars, as he must have the money by two o'clock. Now I knew that the bank where you are to pay this money would let it lay over for a day or two, and I thought it so good a chance to make a couple of hundreds for you, that I took the note with your money."

His employer although he expressed some little dissatisfaction at first, yet upon the whole was so well pleased with the operation that he did not complain much, but went immediately and arranged for his note, Zephaniah triumphing for a moment in his cunning. This exultation was of short continuance.

As the reader has probably anticipated, this note for twelve hundred dollars, one of the best notes in Boston, as our honest broker called it, and indeed the whole story, was a mere invention hatched up to put off the evil hour. Middleborough intended by some management to raise the money, and concluded that the imaginary note would of course be left

in his hands for collection, and that he could easily arrange the business in the course of the six months. What then was his consternation, when Mr. B. his customer, came early the next morning into his office, and remarked to him thus: "I cannot get the money anywhere to pay my note, but the bank will renew it upon my giving them collateral security, and I have agreed to deposite the note you took for me yesterday, so hand it to me if you please." Our hero was now in for it, and being driven from one resource to another, told B. that he had accidentally left his pocket-book with the note in it at home that morning, but that he would step and get it. He did indeed take his hat and leave the office, not to get the note, for indeed such a note as he had described had never had any existence, but to make a note. A few minutes sufficed for the forgery. Nor was this the worst of it; he knew very well that the person whose name he had forged never had notes in the market, and that the mere circumstance of the

existence of such a note might lead to suspicion and inquiry, and that his only safety lay in absconding at once. He concluded however that he might as well add to his funds by adding to his crimes, and not go pennyless away. He therefore, after giving to Mr. B. the note in question, proceeded to forge another, which he sold at an immense loss, went home, packed up a few necessaries, and, before the next morning, had placed himself under an assumed name without the limits of his native State, to wander a miserable vagabond upon the face of the earth. His wife with her children retired to her father's house. His poor brother, who soon ascertained the extent of Zephaniah's villany and of his own misfortune, is again an object of charity; and sunk in still deeper dejection from the disappointment of his hopes and the disgrace reflected on his family by the crimes of one of its members, longs for death to relieve him of an existence which the misconduct of his only brother has rendered hateful to him.

ST. GEORGE FALLENBERG.

9

ST. GEORGE FALLENBERG.

My acquaintance with Fallenberg* commenced in a singular manner. I had been out shooting, and, fatigued with a long tramp over hill and dell, "through bush and through brier," had seated myself with my gun in hand on a rock by the side of a beautiful sheet of water. The faithful Tiger, my canine companion in many a hunting ramble, had placed himself at my feet. Idly musing, I gazed on the waves as they broke upon the gravelly shore. All at once my attention was attracted by a light pleasure-boat, which with streamers

* This story was not communicated to me by Hardspeed, the events it refers to having happened before his time; but was related to me by a friend with whom I was conversing upon the subject, and who was well acquainted with the parties. Editor.

gay and bright came dancing over the water. The party it contained was composed of one lady and several gentlemen. The boat was under a press of sail, and from her movements did not appear to be under the direction of a very skillful pilot. Her course resembled that of a drunken man, now yawing this way and then that. It was this uncertainty in her motion which first drew my attention, and as the boat advanced towards the shore — for she appeared to be beating — and the objects within it became more distinctly visible, I continued attentively to examine its appearance.

After she had approached within a few rods of the shore an attempt was made to put her about, when, from some accident, or more probably in consequence of the awkwardness of her crew, for I could not well perceive the cause, she suddenly capsized and immediately sunk. All the men were able to swim excepting one, and he had been fortunate enough to secure a board or plank which sustained him in the water. My whole interest, however,

was directed to the lady. For a moment her clothes supported her; but the surface being rough, they were almost immediately saturated with water, and she had I believe sunk once, when she was seized by the hair and upheld by one of her companions. All this took place in a few seconds and while I was stripping off my coat and boots; for, being a strong and expert swimmer, I did not hesitate a moment to plunge in to their aid, no board or rope or other means of assistance being at hand. In my efforts I was anticipated by Tiger, who had already almost reached the sinking girl. For a short time the gentleman who had caught her had been able to keep her head above water, but his strength, all booted and clothed as he was, was very evidently failing him, and it was even doubtful whether he could sustain her until Tiger was near enough to relieve him. It is absolutely incredible how many thoughts can pass through the mind in a moment. I had before my mind in that half minute the feelings of years. The parents and

friends whom I imagined were to be separated forever from that being just before so full of animation, perhaps her husband and children mourning for her loss — the tears which would be shed and the melancholy diffused, as the sad story should spread from one to another of her friends and acquaintances. All these visions and many more floated before my eyes in that agitating moment, while I was swimming to the relief of the drowning persons, for now they were evidently exhausted and sinking. A moment more and they would have been gone; but that moment — what a life of suspense! — that moment brings them assistance. Tiger, wholly destitute of gallantry, had taken hold of the gentleman. This I did not afterwards regret, because being close by his side, it gave me an opportunity to sustain the lady, and by our united exertions both were brought safely to the shore, although each was almost lifeless — the lady from fright and suffocation, and her companion from fatigue.

The persons thus providentially rescued from

a watery grave were taken to a neighboring house, where the remainder of the party, as they emerged from the water, also assembled, whence a messenger was despatched for a carriage; for although several boats were near at hand, and her residence, as I afterwards ascertained, was nearly opposite the point where the accident happened, yet the lady with an instinctive dread of the element from which she had just been delivered, would not hear for a moment of trusting herself again to its treacherous protection. This lady was the wife of Fallenberg, who had thus nearly perished in endeavoring to save her.

It is unnecessary to repeat all that was said on the occasion, or to describe the natural gratitude of both to me as their preserver, or my quite as natural awkwardness in being obliged to listen to their repeated, and, as it appeared to me, exaggerated acknowledgements —acknowledgements in which Tiger shared. When the carriage, which brought dry clothes for all the party, arrived, I took leave of them,

not without having been first obliged to engage to visit them the next day, and to bring Tiger with me to their house, to which they gave me a direction.

Fair rose the morning of the following day, and Tiger by his eager frisky motions seemed to anticipate a holiday, even before I ordered my horse, for the weather tempted me to an equestrian excursion.

The residence of Fallenberg was but a few miles from the city in the outskirts of the village of Reddingham, and a brisk gallop soon brought me in sight of it. I say gallop, for in those days a canter was not reckoned vulgar. It was not necessary then to prove one's title to gentility to mount a hard-trotting horse, who would throw you a foot from the saddle at every step. A lady could ride without being shaken to pieces, and a gentleman could rack easily along. At present, a man moving over the Tremont road on horseback, looks more like a groom showing his horse's paces than a gentleman riding for pleasure, and a lady very

much resembles a jockey riding for a subscription plate.

A lovely place was the dwelling of Fallenberg. It was in sight of the pond which the day before had so nearly proved fatal to its two principal inhabitants. A fine lawn extended itself in an inclined plane of smooth shaven turf from the house to the road. There were noble forest trees all around, not planted in straight walks resembling the line of chains which present themselves in precise array along the line of the best parlor of a country tavern, nor like the trees which make Boston Common look like a book of diagrams for the study of mathematics, but scattered about in beautiful clumps at irregular distances, and yet so arranged as to be at once an ornament and a shelter. The house itself consisted of a centre, along the front of which was a piazza, which at either end communicated by low windows with two wings. The entrance was into a long hall extending the whole front of the centre and adorned with pictures and stat-

ues. Behind this hall was the dining-room. The whole of one wing was occupied by the library and a small study connected with it, and in the other were two spacious parlors communicating with each other by means of folding-doors.

Upon my alighting at the door, the servant informed me that Fallenberg and his wife were in the garden, and was about to call them, but I desired him not to do so, and requested to be allowed to go and find them. Passing into the dining-room and through the glass windows which opened down to the ground, I was ushered out upon a beautiful terrace, which overlooked a charming valley laid out in the most tasteful and elegant manner. A series of terraces conducted me to the bottom, through which meandered a bubbling brook, which, after various windings, discharged itself into the neighboring lake. Not finding the objects of my search here, I crossed a rustic bridge, over which the road passed to the other side of the valley, which,

with the hill beyond, excepting a small strip on the borders of the stream, was left almost in a state of nature, or if art had been there with her busy hand, she had only passed lightly over the scene. Her presence indeed was felt rather than seen, in the removal of brush and underwood, which rendered the hill more easily accessible, without diminishing its sylvan appearance. At a distance indeed it looked like a miniature mountain with its variety of trees and its wild flowering shrubs. On the summit was erected an observatory, from which the city with its spires, the harbor with its green islands, the neighboring villages with their churches, and the distant mountains, were all distinctly visible. After clambering for a while through steep and narrow, though fragrant and flowery paths, I at length reached the summit of the hill, where I perceived, as I had anticipated, Fallenberg and his wife seated together with their only daughter, a little girl three years old, and to whom her father was pointing out the differ-

ent objects in the distance, and endeavoring to teach her to repeat their names. I watched for several minutes the eager interest with which each parent listened to her lisping voice, and when, after several efforts, she succeeded in mastering some hard word, my eyes glistened as first the one and then the other of her parents rewarded her with a kiss or an embrace. Where now are those tender parents? Where now is that beautiful child? But let me not anticipate.

At length, while Fallenberg was pointing to a dome in the direction in which I stood, the eyes of the little girl were arrested by my appearance, and when her father desired her to pronounce the name of the object, she called it a man, and so resolutely persisted in it, that I perceived I was discovered — the child mistaking me for the object pointed out. I need not say that I was most cordially received by Fallenberg and his wife, who took the opportunity thus afforded to show me the beauties of the surrounding scenery.

Julia — such was the name of Fallenberg's wife — had by this time entirely recovered from the effects of yesterday's accident, and presented indeed a radiant appearance. She was neither tall nor short. Her figure was of a medium height, and perfectly formed. Of her dress I shall say nothing, excepting that it was then, as at all other times when I saw her, of that neat and becoming kind which does not attract particular attention, but which leaves the wearer and the visiter at perfect ease, to think and talk about something else than mere external appearance. Her complexion was fair and her eyes dark blue. Her hair too was dark, and shaded a forehead so white that alabaster alone could rival it. Her face was not regularly beautiful, but there was in it

"The ray of mind which makes each feature play."

On this morning there was a shade of thought which clouded her countenance; probably the occurrence of yesterday had given it a more contemplative cast. There she stood, lovely

as an angel, her expressive eyes turned first on me and then on her husband, as if she would say, 'I know not which to be most grateful to, to you, stranger, for saving the life of my husband, or to my husband for periling his own to save mine.'

Soon after my arrival, Julia retired with her little girl, and left me alone with Fallenberg. And here I will take the opportunity to relate what I afterwards learned, at different times, of their history.

St. George Fallenberg was the son of a wealthy and most respectable inhabitant of Boston, and was educated in the most liberal manner, having been permitted, after leaving the university, to make the tour of Europe, and also to visit many interesting portions of Asia and of Africa. This was an advantage at that time enjoyed by few, and was appreciated accordingly. On his return from his foreign tour, being an only son he was allowed to occupy his time as he chose. Not deeming it necessary to his future subsistence, as his

inheritance was ample, he had not studied any profession; and although his tastes and habits were literary, yet, from mere ennui, he contracted the habit which afterwards proved so fatal to his happiness — the habit of play; not indeed for very large sums, but to such an extent as to occupy much of his time, and sometimes to occasion pecuniary inconvenience. There cannot be a more fatal mistake committed by parents and guardians than to bring up their children and wards, however wealthy, without profession or occupation. In a country like this, where almost every man has his living to get, there are scarcely any without employment, excepting the vicious; everybody else is busy. The result is, that, for the want of other companions, young men brought up without business are naturally left to associate with men of the most dissipated and abandoned character, and their ruin is the almost certain consequence of such contamination.

Fortunately as it was then thought by the friends of Fallenberg, just as they were begin-

ning to feel some anxiety on account of his fondness for cards, he met with Julia Morganville. She was an orphan, left with scarcely any blood relations, though with a handsome independence, in the care of her guardian, whom I will call general Mannington, a most respectable and somewhat distinguished political character of the period, about twenty-five years ago, and a man who would be readily recognized by many individuals now living if his real name should be mentioned.

St. George and Julia had met but twice before their tastes and dispositions attracted them to each other. In due time an overture of his hand and fortune was made by Fallenberg, which was referred by the lady to her guardian. St. George's habits were well known to him, and with the utmost candor he represented to Julia that his only objection to him was his fondness for play.

"But," said Julia in a conversation upon the subject in reply to this objection, "my dear guardian, I have conversed seriously with him

on this very topic; and he assures me that he has not seen a card since the first night of our acquaintance. He says, moreover, that he has been in the habit of playing only for want of employment, and that after we are married so many new sources of occupation will be opened to him that he shall not feel the least inclination to return to his former pursuits."

"But, my dear girl," said the general in answer, "recollect for a moment, that after you have been for a short time settled down in the quiet of domestic life, all these new sources of occupation, as you call them, to a mind accustomed like his to the excitement of cards, will be a constantly returning monotony. His love for you will no doubt for a time restrain him; but being as he is without business or profession, he will soon weary of the sameness of home, and will long for some variety. His old friends, his old companions, his old feelings will return; and it is to be feared that he will plunge with redoubled eagerness into his old habits."

"Oh, general Mannington, you do not know St. George. A mind like his can never be long satisfied with pursuits so trifling and vain, not to say so vicious and criminal. Even if he should for a time amuse himself with a social game, I have no fear that he will give himself up again to cards. Besides, you pay me a poor compliment to think that my attractions are so inferior to those of a few pieces of pasteboard!"

"Alas, my Julia, I regret that I cannot agree with you," returned the general. "Of St. George's talents I have no doubt. In every other respect he is just the man I should select for you; but my experience satisfies me that when a man has once participated in the unnatural excitement of play, nothing will ever wean him from the unhallowed pursuit. I can never consent. You will be of age in a year. Your property and your person will then be at your own disposal; until then it is useless to make application to me. My mind is resolved." With much impatience and many

complaints of the obstinacy of her guardian, as they called it, the lovers were compelled to wait the prescribed time, and were then married, in spite of the advice of the good general, who continued to oppose the match to the last.

Soon after his marriage, St. George had the misfortune to lose both of his parents, a loss which he felt very deeply, and which the inheritance of a large fortune, which thereby accrued to him, did not for some time seem to alleviate.

About this time, being out on an excursion accompanied by a few friends, he was attracted by the appearance of this spot, and observing at once with the eye of a lover of nature the capabilities of the place, he purchased the estate. The summer following he planned, and shortly before I was introduced to his acquaintance, he had completed the building he then occupied.

Immersed in the cares of building and of improving his grounds, constantly surrounded

by architects, by painters, and gardeners, St. George had thus far not discovered the slightest disposition to return to his old amusement. Indeed the only relaxations he allowed himself were an occasional visit to the theatre and now and then a ride into the country. After so much bustle of building and furnishing and moving, he seemed really to enjoy the quiet management of his estate, the society of his wife, and the prattle of his little girl, who was born the second year of their marriage.

But to return to my visit. The morning was spent in a ramble through the grounds and in the enjoyment of the charming views to be observed from different parts of Fallenberg's estate. After dinner—for which the exercise of the forenoon had given me an unwonted appetite—I took my leave, and prepared to return to town, highly delighted with my visit. Tiger was not allowed to accompany me. Julia and her husband insisted upon retaining him, and, having made the acquaintance of little Julia, he seemed not unwilling to remain behind.

From this time I continued to visit them as opportunity presented, and became an intimate friend of both. They had not many relatives, no near ones at all. They had not many acquaintances. They seemed wrapt up in each other; and living as they did several miles from town, their city friends seldom visited them, and they did not appear to regret it.

The summer had now passed, the autumn leaf had faded, the snow began to fall. No employment was afforded by the garden or the grounds. All the buildings were complete. The house was finished and furnished; and it appeared to me, when I rode out to see them occasionally, that Fallenberg began to look tired and weary. Indeed, one day at dinner he complained that the country was very well for summer, "but," said he, "when winter comes with his snowy covering, the country is dreary and dull." Julia looked earnestly at him, and at length exclaimed,

"Oh, how can you say so, dear St. George. The winter is the dearest of all the seasons to

me. What can be more beautiful, nay, more sublime, than the wild and stormy winter, more especially when you contrast the tempest which rages without with the quiet and repose which prevails within. Winter is peculiarly the time for the enjoyment of home and of social pleasures. The bright, blazing fire, the cheerful countenances around it, the well-stored library, — with all these sources of happiness, how can the winter be dull?"

"You talk like a woman, dearest," returned he, "whose thoughts are all concentrated in home and home-bred joys."

Julia made no reply; but a sad look seemed reproachfully to say, 'Your happiness was once to be found alone at home.'

I suggested the convenience of a house in town for the winter. To this proposition Julia objected; and indeed her husband intimated that he had expended so liberally, not to say lavishly, in the purchase of his country house and in the ornament of his grounds, that his fortune, though affluent, would not admit of

his keeping two establishments. At the notion of boarding, both revolted; and after some few remarks upon the difference of town and country living, the conversation subsided.

The weather had been so exceedingly unpleasant and stormy, that for the several following weeks I did not visit the Fallenbergs; but one morning in January, the sun rose beautifully; the earth's icy covering glittered in its beams; and the temperature was so mild that I was tempted to make an excursion to Reddingham. I found both my friends at home, and was invited to partake of an early dinner, Julia remarking, "St. George has concluded to amuse himself by engaging a little in business since you were here, and we accommodate our hours to his engagements."

"And is it not more convenient," I inquired, "to dine after the business of the day is over, and to feel that the remainder of it is to be devoted to quiet and home?"

"I have often made the same remark to St. George," replied Julia; "but somehow he is

more peremptory than he used to be, and he will have his own way."

This she said half laughing, and yet there was a shade on her brow that showed it was not wholly a jest. We dined, and I then set off for town with Fallenberg, who told me where his counting-room was, and rather coldly, as I thought, invited me to call and see him. This at the time I declined; but in the course of the afternoon, being obliged to go in the direction of his place of business, and seeing his little tin sign at the door, I concluded to take opportunity to look in on him. He was not in, and there was no appearance of his having been there the whole afternoon. It appeared strange to me, after he had discovered so much anxiety to come into town, and seasonably, that he should have left so soon; but supposing that he had accomplished his object sooner than he had expected and returned home, I thought no more of the matter.

After this time, although I occasionally called at Fallenberg's counting-room, and once or

twice found him there, I saw no more of Julia until the following March, when I again visited them, and found that St. George's early dining still continued, and that he spent all his afternoons and evenings away from home, although he generally returned as early as ten or eleven o'clock. Surely, thought I, there must be a great change here, and something mysterious. Here is a man, something of a *bon vivant*, fond of ease and comfort, engaging in a kind of business which obliges him to hurry through his dinner, and spend all his afternoons and evenings away from home. What can this business be so peculiar, which requires no attention in the morning when other people are most busy, and is to be transacted when most others are at rest? I did not cease to wonder, although I made no remark.

Everything at home seemed to wear the same appearance. Mutual confidence appeared still to continue between the husband and wife. Fallenberg seemed as pleasant and cheerful as ever, and they were both as cor-

dial to me. I did not stay to dine that afternoon, although warmly solicited to do so, having an engagement to meet with a supper party in town, at a house then kept by G***, who is since dead. This was a house in those days much frequented by clubs, parties, &c. Going to keep my appointment, I was accidentally shown by the servant into the wrong room, where, to my utter astonishment, I discovered what Fallenberg's business was.

I there found him engaged, with five other young men of great respectability, with most of whom I was acquainted, playing at *vingt un*. Apologizing for my mistake, and being about to withdraw, I was urgently requested to remain and join the party. As my own company had not yet assembled, and the game was one which almost any number can play at, I sat down for a few moments, prompted principally by curiosity to observe the proceedings of a friend in whom by this time I felt a more than usual interest.

At the moment I came in, Fallenberg was

dealing. He had divided five times on tens; in other words, he had taken and was betting on five different hands. Four of the party were betting five dollars each, but one of them I saw had laid on the table a bank-note for one hundred dollars, of the United States bank. This I recognized, because the bills of that denomination were larger than the smaller ones.

The adversary who was betting one hundred dollars had divided twice. Great interest was manifested at the table. The ordinary probability was, under the circumstances, that about one hundred or two hundred dollars would be won by Fallenberg. The hands were now made. Fallenberg had shown his hands, which appeared to be remarkably favorable; four of them being twenty each, and the other eighteen, when his antagonist turned over his two hands, and showed twenty-one in each, he having divided on aces and succeeded in filling both, which made them the best hands at the table. He consequently won on

each hand double of all the five hands of Fallenberg. Winning singly on five hands would have been five hundred dollars; of course winning double twice of the whole five, made two thousand dollars, which was thus lost by St. George in about five minutes by the turning up of a dozen cards. It is to be remarked that one hundred dollars is a very heavy bet on this game, much more heavy than it would be on any ordinary game, as the above incident shows, the chance of doubling occurs so often. The usual bet is from twenty-five cents to one dollar. The company present did not however seem to regard this as anything very unusual with them. One of them, the moment it was over, coolly asking the waiter for a cigar, and another for a glass of brandy and water, while the remainder were busy with their new hands. I wanted no further information as to the nature of St. George's business. It was evident that his afternoons and evenings during the whole winter had been spent in play, with a company consisting in the whole perhaps of

ten or a dozen. As the individuals were all well known to each other, being men of all professions, and all of them of very respectable standing in society, they did not consider it or call it gambling, but only an agreeable and pleasant pastime for a winter afternoon and evening. Thus they were in the habit of meeting sometimes every day, always as often as three times a week. The meeting usually closed with a supper of delicacies, accompanied by rich and expensive wines, and although sometimes protracted until twelve, generally closed at ten or eleven o'clock in the evening. These particulars I ascertained subsequently; for St. George, finding that the discovery had been made, attempted no concealment, and frequently afterwards invited me to join their party, which I did several times at the same place. The above named sum was the largest I ever saw lost at any one time. Whether they played with more caution when I was with them, or whether in fact this amount was larger than

was usually played for, I know not. However, the loss of one or two hundred dollars was a very common occurrence.

In addition to any losses which might be sustained by the players, the charge of the host for their entertainment was at least five dollars each, for every meeting; so that if nothing were eventually lost at play, the expense of one hundred days, at five dollars, for they met at least as often as one hundred times in the course of the fall, winter, and spring, would be five hundred dollars each. Certainly one or two of the persons present lived, as I knew, on salaries of one thousand and fifteen hundred dollars, and it is obvious that they could not afford to lose even their proportion of the expenses. I became satisfied that one at least of the party did not lose, although I have no reason to suppose he was guilty of any dishonesty. The operation was this. Darkfield, that was his name, was a salary officer with an income of fourteen hundred dollars. When he lost beyond a certain sum, he

never paid, but managed to have it played off, as it is called. When he won, it being generally from those among the company who were rich, he put the money in his pocket. He was the same person who won the two thousand dollars of Fallenburg. At another time when they were playing, Darkfield had been betting boldly with the hope of another windfall like the former, until he had lost five hundred dollars more than he could pay. Fallenburg again was dealing, and knowing Darkfield's poverty, too generous to wish to distress him, he readily allowed him to bet large sums, under circumstances which rendered it almost certain that he would win them, so that in fact on that very same evening, Darkfield not only paid the five hundred dollars by playing, that is played it off, but actually won of St. George about one hundred dollars more.

My visits still continued to be frequent at Reddingham, but of course I said nothing to Julia of the nature of her husband's business. She, poor soul, had not the slightest suspicion of its character, but seemed rather to rejoice

that he had found an employment which appeared to occupy his time agreeably, although I perceived from her conversation that he was absent from home more than she liked.

Spring at last arrived with all its beauties, and once more it afforded an incessant and healthful employment to Fallenberg, who for the time seemed to be wholly engrossed by it. The convivial meetings were suspended during the summer on account of the shortness of the evenings.

Early in the following autumn I sailed for Europe, where I remained during the whole of the winter and spring. On my return to Boston, one of my first visits was to the Fallenbergs. I found them as usual, although there did not appear to be the same profusion in their housekeeping. Many little contrivances had been introduced obviously for the sake of economy. These I should scarcely have noticed if they had disclosed themselves to me gradually as they were from time to time adopted; but returning after a considerable absence, the change from their old habits of

extravagance immediately struck me. Whether this change was the consequence of a loss of property, or only of a more prudent disposition on the part of Fallenberg, such as a man frequently acquires after he begins to feel the responsibility of a family, I could not then determine. Everything appeared to have gone well with the family, and Julia was now evidently in a situation which promised to make her husband soon the father of another infant.

That summer hastened away; and on winged messengers flew the hours which were big with the fate of poor St. George. With the long evenings again commenced Fallenberg's business, to which, like other persons engaged in the same pursuit, he returned with redoubled eagerness after a temporary cessation. It may be asked why I did not interfere by advice and counsel. In the first place I was entirely ignorant of St. George's affairs. His resources appeared to me to be inexhaustible; and besides I did not then see any great harm in the course he was pursuing. It seemed to

me, as it did to the rest of us, that cards were an innocent and pleasant amusement, and that if we lost one night, why it was to our own set, and we should win it back at another time. In fact it was a common remark, that we considered money lost at cards as only lent to a good debtor, who would certainly repay it. Moreover, I did not see so much of the club this winter as usual, having, fortunately for myself, other engagements to occupy me, which did not however prevent me from keeping up my usual intercourse with Fallenberg and his family. By about January and February, a striking change in the appearance of their affairs was observable. At my visits I occasionally missed a piece of furniture or a picture. In particular I noticed the absence of a picture of lady Shirley copied from an original by Van Dyke, a portrait which Julia had always highly valued, fancying that it resembled her mother whom she had lost in her early childhood.

It afterwards appeared that Fallenberg had

gradually become embarrassed. Having, almost before he thought of it, lost all his ready money, he was induced to stake very large sums in the hope—a hope which I believe is always uppermost in the mind of a gambler—of winning back the money he had lost. This expectation was not realized; on the contrary new losses followed, and his bank and insurance stocks, in which his father left him large investments, were sacrificed at the shrine of this horrible foe to human happiness. At length, his necessities became such that his house was gradually dismantled to satisfy this insatiable appetite. Among other things which he sold, was this picture of lady Shirley, for which, having been offered a high price, not all his love for his wife, or his wife's love of the picture could prevent his selling it. In the meantime his ordinary bills for household and other expenses had remained unpaid. Thus he continued for a few short months longer, until his baker, his butcher, his grocer, and other tradesmen,

having a suspicion of the way in which his money went, and being tired of waiting for more than a year's credit, at length determined to keep each other in countenance, and fell at once upon his household furniture with writs and attachments.

In short the catastrophe of my tale hastens on like a gambler's fate. The property was sacrificed by a forced sale. His other personal property had gone before. His real estate was already mortgaged for more than it was worth. The necessity of moving from the house occurred just before the time of Julia's confinement. The shock of all this, together with the knowledge of the cause, which had been abruptly communicated by a neighbor, was too great for one in her delicate circumstances. She woke suddenly from a dream of happiness, to sink fortunately for herself into the arms of death.

Fallenberg himself, within a year after the loss of his wife, died a raving maniac. Their lovely daughter was thus left unprotected,

helpless and destitute. As I have mentioned before, her parents had no near relations living. There was no one to support or shelter her, and she is at this moment living in this city, reduced from affluence, from ease, from luxury, from everything that was splendid and elegant, to a condition of almost menial dependence by the deplorable folly of her parent.

THE SUICIDE.

THE SUICIDE.

George Adson was left by his parents an orphan. He had a sister and a younger brother. In his youth he was remarkable for his talent for business and his skill in figures. These qualities, together with a first rate reputation for honesty and integrity, recommended him to one of the oldest and most respectable mercantile houses in the city, by whom he was offered an honorable, and considering his youth, a very lucrative situation.

Here George acquitted himself so well, that in a very short time, the most unlimited confidence being reposed in his uprightness, he was entrusted with the books and cash of the concern.

The sister of Adson was a lovely girl, and

both herself and her brother were solely dependent upon him for support, a dependence however which they did not feel, for he had a generous and noble nature, and it seemed to give him pleasure to contribute to their support. Soon after obtaining the situation above mentioned, he placed them both at the most celebrated schools and defrayed their whole expenses out of his own salary. It did not seem to be an object with him as it is with many young men, merely to hoard up his income until it should have increased to such a sum as to form a capital, a disposition by the way very commendable where it does not interfere with other duties. He parted with his money as freely for his brother and sister as for himself, nay more, he would often economise himself for the sake of providing them not merely with things necessary, but with every convenience and luxury.

In the meantime George had by no means neglected intellectual culture. He read, he studied. His father was a man of literature as

well as of business. He had early taught his son, that it was as necessary for a merchant to be well-informed as for a lawyer or a doctor, and had set him the example — an example by which his son profited. He was a proficient in chemistry, understood perfectly, and could speak fluently both the French and Spanish languages, and was well acquainted with music. Indeed it was generally thought by those who knew him intimately, that he could not fail to make a figure in the world, where his knowledge and accomplishments must be sooner or later fully appreciated. All this talent, all this information, all this cultivation of mind, all this fraternal affection could not preserve him from the insidious seduction of the all-absorbing passion for play.

Adson was accustomed to see his friends, his father and others play whist in his childhood, and had never, for a moment, supposed that there was, or could be anything wrong in this, as he called it, innocent amusement. He had been in the habit of playing it all his life,

and at about, or a little before, the time of his entering the service where he then was, he had joined what is called a whist club.

To show from how small a beginning may arise a great evil, it may be mentioned that the standing rules of the club were, that no bet should exceed twenty-five cents, that they never should commence a new game after eleven o'clock, and that the bill should never exceed fifty cents each, excepting once a year, when they celebrated their anniversary, and a little more latitude was allowed. It was also understood that they should meet only once a week.

The occasion of their breaking over the three first rules was this. One of the members had invited a young gentleman from New-York to meet with them. On sitting down, he proposed as his usual bet, five dollars; this startled the party, but they did not like to displease a guest, and accordingly complied with his desire, in consequence of which as no one wished to leave off much the loser,

the sitting was protracted until two o'clock in the morning; of course an unusual supply of refreshments was necessary, and thus, by one accidental circumstance, all the rules which they had devised to restrain themselves from improper excess, were broken through and disregarded. It was not easy to restore things to their old state. It is true that the same temptation did not occur again immediately, but the excitement of high play having once been felt, it was not easy afterwards to return to any moderate bet.

It is said that the tiger who has never tasted human flesh is almost harmless, but once let him be driven by the keenness of hunger to feast on man, and his ferocity can never afterwards be tamed. He craves for blood, and can be satisfied only with carnage. Gaming is something like this. Before one ever plays for money, he cares little about cards, but the passion for gambling having once been excited by a bet, however small, can never afterwards be satisfied with playing for mere amusement.

With savage cruelty it seeks its own selfish gratification, regardless of consequences, and, without mercy, satiates its appetite in the destruction of its unfortunate victims.

The club could never afterwards be induced to return to their original bet, although a regard for decency impelled them to observe more regular hours. Still for a time they adhered to the system of weekly meetings only, but this rule also was violated, by the same means which overturned the others. Another guest from abroad was introduced, who remained with them all the evening. At its close he remarked, that he should stay in town one night more, and should like to meet them again. This proved too strong a temptation to most of the members, and by this time they had become so much interested, that a much slighter inducement would have proved sufficient. The club therefore met the next night, and now having completely emancipated themselves from all restraint, they no longer kept within any limits of times, or seasons, or sums.

This result was some time in arriving, and during the formation of the habit, Adson had many misgivings; but he invariably came to the same conclusion, that what his father had done before him, could not be wrong; that a game of whist was innocent, and that as it only occupied his evenings, and did not encroach upon the time of his employers or interfere with their business, there was no harm that could come of it. Where then was his high and generous ambition? where was his literary taste, his love of books and of science? Alas! he had no more time to devote to such pursuits. Every hour, every moment that could be withdrawn from business was devoted either to the study of Hoyle, or the practice of his games. Even his affection for his brother and sister, his only relatives, was deadened by his greater love for much less worthy objects.

The natural effects of this course soon began to be experienced, a want of funds. This want was supplied by depredations upon the cash of his employers. Adson easily satisfied

his conscience. It was only taking his salary in advance. It was not until a very alarming run of ill luck had tempted him to appropriate a large sum, that he became aware of the precipice on the brink of which he was standing. It was then too late to retreat, at least he thought so. Let it be remembered however, by every one whom a similar thoughtlessness may reduce to the same condition, that it is never too late to repent. Anything is better than to persist in doing wrong, merely from the belief that it is too late to retrieve a mischief already done. This will be illustrated in the subsequent conduct of this unfortunate young man. Instead of facing the evil boldly, instead of acknowledging the wrong he had done his employers, and endeavoring to retrace his steps, which it was not even then too late to do, he rushed on to greater excesses.

The sum Adson had embezzled being too great for him ever to hope to replace by ordinary means, even by the most unexpected run

of luck at cards, he adopted another method of procuring it. He engaged in lottery speculations. This was before lotteries were prohibited by law. No scheme was now got up in which he had not tickets; and sometimes he would buy half the tickets in one lottery in order to secure the highest prize. It would scarcely be believed, if the sums were stated which this infatuated youth wasted in the idle hope of drawing prizes which would again make him square and restore his peace of mind.

In the meantime his situation was no pleasant one. His books were kept by means of false entries, and it was only owing to the blind confidence of his employers, that the fraud was not detected. How happy would it have been for him, as well as for them, if instead of trusting entirely to his honesty, they had from time to time taken the trouble to look into their books. Let merchants and others beware how they expose young men to temptation. If they are guilty of such folly, some part of the sin, and certainly all the loss will fall upon themselves.

Lotteries were as little profitable to Adson as cards. Drawing after drawing, scheme after scheme, only made him still poorer. Any one may conceive his agony. He was safe no moment. When he went to the counting-room in the morning, he knew not but detection might that day overtake him. When he left for a few moments during the day, he could not tell but that some accidental reference to the books or accounts, during his absence, might bring his misconduct to light. His frauds had by this time become so numerous that a very slight examination would at once have excited suspicion and discovered the whole. Several circumstances had already transpired which it required all his shrewdness and promptness to explain satisfactorily, and had it not been for the large dealings and extensive transactions of the company, nothing could have saved him. Thus affairs went with him. His days were spent in trembling anxiety, his nights in excessive dissipation, in the vain hope that care and trouble might be

drowned for a moment and forgotten in the excitement occasioned by good cheer and play.

The end came at last. One Saturday a considerable sum was missing, and although George endeavored, as he had often done before on other similar occasions, to explain its loss, and satisfy one of the partners, that it appeared to be lost merely in consequence of a mistake in balancing accounts, this did not satisfy him. It besame a subject of conversation with all the members of the firm. Suspicions were excited by this and several former mysterious circumstances, and although it did not point particularly at Adson, yet it was determined that there should be a strict and minute examination of all the books; and for that purpose, all the partners and clerks were directed to meet on Saturday evening at the counting-room, to investigate the matter thoroughly.

All assembled at the appointed time excepting Adson, and the examination had continued but a very little while, when his absence was easily accounted for. To the astonishment of

the firm, they ascertained that they had been defrauded of thousands of dollars, and the result of the investigation very clearly showed by whom. All these losses they might easily have avoided, by a regular and an habitual examination of their books and accounts, and perhaps at the same time have preserved from destruction a youth who was eminently fitted, both by nature and education, to be at once an ornament and a blessing to his country.

It remains only to relate, that the unfortunate Adson was found the next morning, lying near the Western Avenue with his throat cut, evidently by his own hand, which even in death held with a firm grasp the instrument of self-destruction. The wretched young man in a frenzy of desperation had been driven to commit suicide, convinced of the certainty of detection in frauds and embezzlements into which he was drawn solely by the destructive vice of play, a vice which is almost certain to involve its determined votary in crime, in despair, and in ruin.